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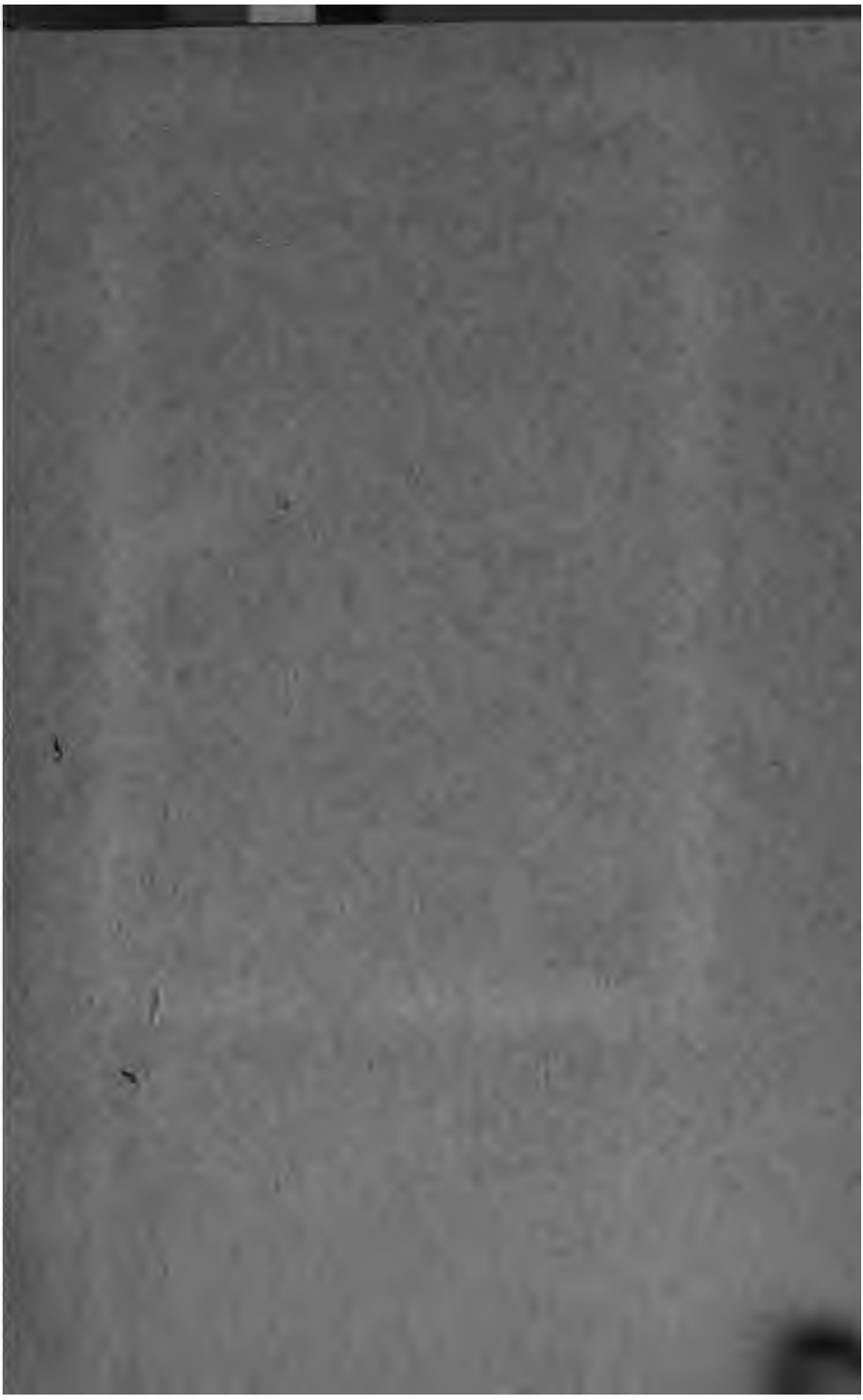

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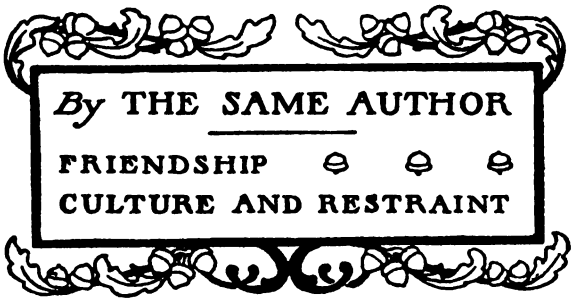
By THE SAME AUTHOR
FRIENDSHIP
CULTURE AND RESTRAINT

WORK

BY

HUGH BLACK, M.A.

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NOT thine to complete the work, yet neither art thou free to lay it down. —THE TALMUD.

IDLENESS AND WORK

THERE is a working class — strong and happy — among both rich and poor: there is an idle class — weak, wicked, and miserable — among both rich and poor. — RUSKIN.

IDLENESS AND WORK

IN some moods there are few things more irritating than a panegyric of work and a denunciation of idleness; for to workers it seems like beating the air so far as they are concerned. They are inclined to think that those who speak most eloquently in praise of work, as if labor were a luxury, are usually people who know little of its burden. Still there is no subject which has more right to be considered, since there is no single subject which fills so large a space in the lives of most.

We may object that we have no choice in the matter, and no need for encouragement or reproof. We at least have the spur of necessity, which would soon prick our side if we tried to dispense with what is our lot. It might seem also as if it

could be said with some truth that idleness is not a very glaring fault of our race, that our country compared with some others is a perfect hive of industry, and that many among us suffer from overwork rather than underwork. It may be worth while considering the subject, though all this be true, and though we ourselves be even desperately industrious; for is it not the case that the false and foolish standard is set up in society which almost looks upon it as a disgrace to work, or at least makes idleness an ideal? If we search for it we may find it in some corner of our own heart. Many work hard with little thought either of the nobility or the meaning of work, but only to get rich so that some fine day they too may be able to be idle. In spite of our activities we may hanker after what we conceive to be the paradise of idleness. The ultimate ambition in our minds is to be freed from the necessity of work, as if work and not idleness

were the evil. We do not value work for its own sake, but think of it as a disagreeable necessity.

The common social ideal is certainly a life of ease and pleasure, not a life of work and service. Society among us seems to be carefully graded in inverse proportion according to the amount of leisure enjoyed. We know how "Society" looks down on trade and business, the industry which alone makes it possible for them to live at all; and as for manual labor, that is another hemisphere! If we do value business, it is for its returns, its profits, not for the honest employment which trains body and mind and develops character. This is not just the ignorant contempt of a select class; it has permeated all classes, so that to climb the social ladder means getting rid of work. Burton gives a chapter full of his quaint and pedantic learning about exercise, quoting the wisdom of the ancients as to the necessity of labor for

health of body and mind, citing Seneca and Xenophon, the practice of the Egyptians of old, Jews, Turks, and then he draws the contrast in irony: "But amongst us the badge of gentry is idleness, — to be of no calling, not to labor, for that 's derogatory to their birth; to be a mere spectator, a drone." This ideal affects the whole social organism, and influences the thought and conduct of all. Some of us, who are very diligent and industrious, have the makings of pretty fair specimens of the sluggard in us, since our hearts are set on that as the great end of life.

Certainly, one of the commonest modern ideals is that of no work, or as near that as possible. This does not refer to the demands of some sections to have more leisure, which will give at least opportunities for fuller self-education. Some of these demands are just enough in a civilized community, and must be granted where practicable. The reference is to

the ideal to be found in all classes, which looks upon toil as only an evil, and which has lost the old moral dignity of labor. This false ideal has cut deep. We find it in literature and in religion. A good many books have been written to show what Utopian life on this earth would be, and they are almost all spoiled by making work an evil thing, to be got rid of as much as possible.

The objection is often made against any form of socialism that nobody would be found willing to do the necessary lower forms of work needed by society. It is a very poor objection. If that were the only objection to socialism, some of us would have little difficulty in believing in it. There are in our midst men and women cheerfully taking upon themselves burdens, and bending their necks to duties, from which they could easily escape. It is incredible that in any state of society the spirit of Christ will die out. Men are this day serving Him faithfully

as hewers of wood and drawers of water, doing for their daily task what the world calls lower work, and who might well be envied for their content of mind and largeness of soul. A stronger objection to socialist ideals is precisely the opposite, that they make too much of the mere externals of life. It is assumed too often that man can live by bread alone. Most of the ideals for perfect human life and society have this flaw. The notion of happiness is like that described in such books as Lord Lytton's *The Coming Race*, where social and political felicity is made to consist of having all they need. The motto of their lives is, They were born; they were happy; they died. There is no stimulus of want, no goad of poverty, no fierce rivalry. We pray for the time when there will be no want and less rivalry, but never for the time when men will be above effort. Was there not a philosopher who thought that the earth was turning into a bun, and the sea into

lemonade, that mankind might be happy without effort?

Some kinds of work are evil because of unhealthy surroundings or fierce competition, but work must have a place in all schemes to ameliorate the race. Work is needed to attain moral progress, and to conserve it when attained. There is nothing more astonishing on this earth of ours than the spectacle of some who do not know how to kill time — so long as there are thorns and thistles of various kinds to keep down. And there is nothing more pathetic than that of others, willing to work and unable to find a place where to use a spade or handle a tool. There is something wrong somewhere, which it behoves us to put right, when these two classes exist.

The subject of this book is, however, not a discussion of economic problems, but the more personal one of our actual work, with its claims on us and its lessons for us. This subject of personal duty is

distinct from the larger question of social rearrangement and schemes for the reorganization of labor, by which fervent reformers hope to bring in a condition of society in which labor will be more fairly apportioned and the fruits of labor be more equably distributed. We are here not concerned with criticising the present state of industry, or criticising the projects of reformers. Such larger considerations do affect the subject, since we are all influenced for good and evil by the social state in which we are placed. Industrial conditions immensely affect the individual worker. But our subject is a primary one, and simpler, if narrower, than such economic discussions. It is the personal duty incumbent on each in this or any other order of society. Here we have our feet on fact, and are not just treading the air vaguely, as is so often the case in dealing with the more grandiose questions about an ideally perfect social reconstruction. We do not need

to wait till society has been transformed by social reformers before we can have a school for character. The school is here, and the door is open. The labor market, as we know it to-day, is sometimes a rough and stern teacher, but it has valuable lessons to enforce, and it is a duty we owe to ourselves to submit ourselves to the discipline.

A further instance of the prevalence of the false ideal is seen in the way it even colors religious thought. Many treat the work and service of life as a painful necessity in order to qualify for the Rest that remaineth, and look forward to a millennium of ease and not to a millennium of holiness. It is of a piece with the offence taken at Christ's birth and home and occupation. The Jews sneered at the Nazarite, and the Nazarites sneered at the Carpenter. Every class has its prejudices, and men could not easily rid their minds of a natural prejudice against

a provincial tradesman as a teacher of religion. Celsus, who wrote the first great polemic against Christianity, made it one of his objections that Christ had worked with His own hands. It was a natural objection to a learned philosopher, who did not enter into the heart of the faith, and who, therefore, could not see the bearing of the strange fact.

Even many defenders of the faith have stumbled at the same thing, and seem to think it unworthy of their Lord to have ever appeared in such a humble guise. The Apochryphal gospels, for example, show Christ above work and worry, doing everything miraculously even when a child. The moral dignity and the spiritual power of the simple gospel story are lost in the stilted artificial divinity, which good men with the best will in the world attributed to the Master. The mediæval stories and legends which gathered round Christ have many of them the same fatal misapprehension. In the

miracle-play introduced into Longfellow's *Golden Legend* this is seen. In one scene the boy Jesus is at play with His school-mates by the river-side, where their game was to make sparrows out of clay. Jesus claps His hands, and the clay sparrows become real birds and fly away singing. These mistakes of friends and enemies of the faith are due to failure to apprehend the deep bearing of what we call Christ's humiliation. We fail utterly if we do not see that common work has been sanctified by Him, and common duty hallowed. He has taken away the curse from work by His life, as well as the curse of sin by His death.

It is remarkable how St. Paul exalts the common duties of daily life — all the more remarkable because he was by nature open to the high enthusiasms which usually neglect, if not despise, the humbler things of practical life. He never lets his mystical raptures and religious fervor cut him off from the

ordinary world of work and duty. Rather, he lifts this up to a plane where the highest motives rule. He links the humblest life to the loftiest spiritual thoughts, and reinforces plain duty by unearthly sanctions. It shames us to see how he ennobles the meanest tasks, the work of a slave, for example, not content with calling it useful and necessary work, but exalting it as truly spiritual. He never despised manual labor, according to the social standard of his time, and even of our own time. He knew too well what it could do for a man, as he worked at his own trade in the intervals of other labors. Perhaps, too, he felt that it brought him into a great succession when he remembered that his Lord had been a carpenter! He knew the value of steady, honest work, and was never more severe in his judgments than when condemning those who neglected work on the plea of religion. The heathen world gave honor to certain

kinds of work, that of government and war, intellectual work, and even the laborious training of the athletes to fit themselves for the great games, but manual labor was classed by them as servile, and that meant work fit only for slaves. They of course recognized that it was necessary in order to keep society going, but it had no honor on that account, but only contempt. It was looked upon as taking away from human dignity, unworthy of a free man. St. Paul insisted that instead of a man being lowered by his work he was raised by it in manhood, growing in character and even in grace, if it were done honestly and faithfully. The common callings of humble life are taken as of God's appointment, a test of conscience and an open way to character.

The false standard of life also widens the cleavage between different classes of the community. The foolish envy of idleness creates bitterness among the

workers, and it has to be confessed that the frivolous work of idlers gives ground for the bitterness. The envy is foolish, whatever we may say about the worse than folly of selfish idleness. Richard Jefferies in one of his sketches tells of meeting three women field-workers. He envied them and thought their health ideal. What would he not give to be like them? "There was that in their cheeks that all the wealth of London could not purchase, a superb health in their carriage princesses could not obtain." But he could see plainly that they regarded him with bitter envy, jealousy, and hatred written in their eyes. They cursed him in their hearts, simply because they worked and he seemed to be idle. Because he did not appear to be doing any visible work, they hated and envied him; and he who knew both lives would have gladly exchanged places to get their unwearied step, and to be always in the open air and abroad upon the earth.

IDLENESS AND WORK

Whether it be a cause or effect of the prevalent ideal, there is a pleasure-loving spirit abroad. We are looking more and more to excitements, and less to duty for our true happiness. In our day there are more temptations than ever before to a great number of people to lead an aimless, useless existence. This is due to the accumulation and extension of wealth in our country, making it possible for many to live without work. Perhaps as a consequence of this the general standard for all of us has been relaxed. There are more occasions for pleasure, for amusements of all sorts, which though innocent in themselves make it easy for us to fritter away a great deal of time, which might be spent with equal recreation to much more purpose. One has only to mention the subject of reading to call up a vision of the mass of trivial and ephemeral and stupid waste of printer's ink. How much of our reading is disconnected, purposeless, inane —

merely to pass the time as we even say. There is a place for recreative literature, but surely the great treasures of the world deserve better treatment, and demand more serious study than most of us ever give them.

Of course there is the very idlest of all idle society, where waste of time is raised to a fine art. Addison, in the *Spectator* of 1712, satirizes the emptiness of many lives of his day, and the satire is perhaps the keener that it consists merely in transcribing from supposed diaries. One is that of a man who had nothing to put into his diary but when he got up in the morning, and when he went to bed, when he smoked three pipes of Virginia tobacco and read the papers, what he had for dinner and when he went to the coffee-house, which was the substitute for the club of these days. It is satire, not of a vicious man, but of an idle man, "designed," as he says, "not so much to expose vice as idleness, and aimed at

those persons who pass away their time rather in trifle and impertinence, than in crimes and immoralities." He recommends his readers to keep a journal of their lives for one week, a kind of self-examination which will give them a true state of themselves, and incline them to consider seriously what they are about. The other extract is from the journal of a fashionable woman whom he calls Clarinda, detailing for five days the time spent in dressing, in washing and combing her lap-dog, in shopping and cheapening a couple of fans, and in seeing company, with a little mild employment thrown in of working half a violet leaf on a flowered handkerchief. Is there not enough force in this antiquated satire to sting still? "I would have Clarinda consider," is Addison's moral, "what a pretty figure she would make among posterity, were the history of her whole life published like these five days of it."

When the soul is awakened to the

meaning of life, the remorse of lost opportunities is only a little less terrible than the remorse of misspent and evil days, the remorse of so many fine intellects in our own literature — as Marlowe, with genius from which Shakespeare did not think he stooped to learn, killed in a drunken street-brawl — or Greene, pamphleteer, romancer, playwright, a leader of wits in the wittiest and keenest time of English literature, dying in distress in the house of a cobbler who had saved him from starvation, pouring out his remorse in the words, "O that a year were granted me to live! . . . Time loosely spent will not again be won. My time is loosely spent, and I undone."

Even when there is no stain in the past, the mere failure to attain carries almost as sore a regret. When opportunities of self-culture were ours, when all the riches of mind and heart and soul of sage and saint were offered to us, when chances of development in character came

to us, and when open doors of service invited us, it is little to be able to say that at least we did nobody any harm. We would not waste property, and throw away an inheritance like a spendthrift, but what about the most valuable gift of all, without which other gifts could not be, the gift of time? No one gets more of it than another at any one period. A strange but true fact is that when anything is wanted to be done, it is always the idlest who say that they have no time. The busiest men somehow can find time to read, and to add to their labors, and to do some service.

Complaints are common among employers of the lack of efficient and zealous help in business. Young men, we are told, are keen about their sport and their games, and seem to want to do as little as possible in return for their salary. Work is something to be gone through, a disagreeable necessity in order to get

recreation. No wise man grudges the young their relaxations and pleasures, but when these usurp the first place we cannot be without qualms for the future. Business men are quite unanimous in asserting that laziness is at the root of most failures. It is possible to make too much of worldly success, but it is also possible to make too little of it. If the want of success, as is often the case, is the result of moral failure, we cannot afford to pass it by as of no account.

Even in our day there is no manual of conduct, which young men might take for practical guidance, more to the point than the old book of Proverbs. As is to be expected from a book which deals so largely with wisdom in the conduct of practical life, it is full of praise of industry and of satire on sloth. It approaches the subject from almost all possible angles, now from the national standpoint, stating that the vigorous nation rules and the weak and slothful is under tribute,

and now from the individual standpoint in all the relationships of life. The industrious man attains wealth — "the hand of the diligent maketh rich": he attains honor and a position of influence — "seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings." It satirizes the incapacity and negligence and shiftlessness of the lazy man, sometimes in such a humorous couplet as this, "The sluggard dips his hand in the dish, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again"; sometimes showing humorously the nuisance a sluggard is to others by his lack of activity and punctuality, "As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him." Sometimes it sternly states the inevitable result of idleness in poverty and misery. Again, it points the plain moral to all who have discretion, as it paints the picture of the sluggard's garden grown over with thorns, its face covered with nettles, and its wall broken down, while

the slothful owner murmurs in stupid dulness, "A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep."

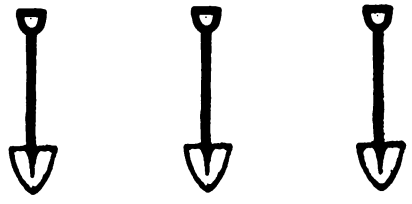
It is chiefly the evident and surface aspects of the question which are treated by the book; and its chief argument is naturally of a piece. Its great argument is the *success* which attends industry either in wealth or power or position; but we are inclined to be such finical moralists to-day that we despise such plain and vulgar standards. It is not the last nor the highest argument, nor is it a rule without exceptions; but at the same time this argument is too palpable to be safely omitted, when we are speaking to men who need all the aids to virtue and all the arguments to right conduct that can be gathered together. It was most natural for this wise book to point to results, to the experience of everybody who could see or think; and it was natural to attempt to reinforce moral action by the evident sanctions that could be estab-

lished offhand. Proverbs is setting forth the accumulated observation and wisdom of the ages when it asserts that the sluggard desireth and hath nothing while the diligent prospers, and that he becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand, but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.

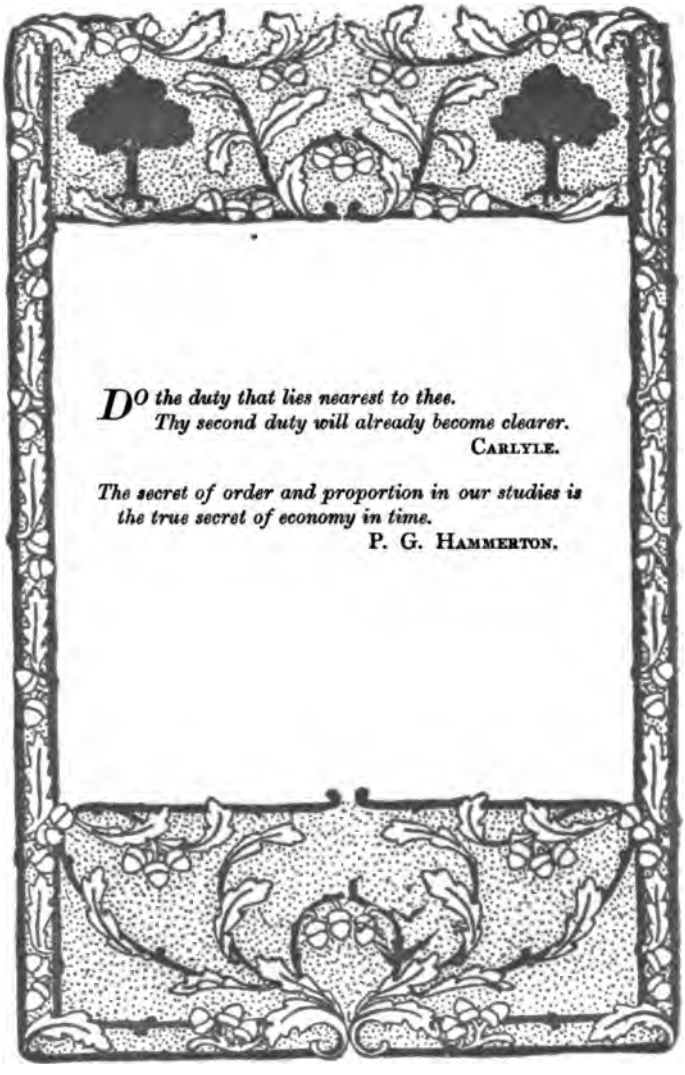
The book, it should be remembered in this connection, makes plain that diligence is not merely a physical thing, the mere thoughtless activity of body that never tires and never rests. It satirizes that type almost as much as the sluggard, the fussy busy worker who goes on without intelligence and without thought. The industry praised here is not exclusively manual, but asks for reflection and prudence and foresight and management. In the counsels of this book it is difficult sometimes to distinguish between the workman and the wise man. The one is implied in the other. The wise man works; and the true worker uses all his faculties of mind.

Now it is a fact, allowing for all possible exceptions, that earnest, serious diligence *does* succeed. Such a laborer is worthy of his hire at least. Prosperity is the natural reward of industry. This is true of peoples as well as of individuals. The prosperous nations are those with the fewest slack hands. It is in keeping with the great natural law which has ordained work for life. The earth bringeth forth fruit of herself while man sleeps and rises, but before that there must have been the preparatory toil, ploughing, sowing, and weeding; and when nature has done all there must still be labor, the labor of harvest, reaping, and gathering, and winnowing. Nothing thrives, as Proverbs asserts, in the sluggard's garden. If a man will do nothing for his farm, his farm will do nothing for him. Human life and the whole order of society are maintained by labor, and those who will not work have no real place in the social scheme. The

world's means of subsistence is won by labor, and life without some sort of service in it can only be classed as parasitic. Wilful and persistent idleness puts a man outside of the plan of campaign. To prophesy reward for industry is not just to state a low form of prudential morality; it is to state a fact on which the very world is built.



THE HABIT OF WORK



DO the duty that lies nearest to thee.
Thy second duty will already become clearer.

CARLYLE.

The secret of order and proportion in our studies is the true secret of economy in time.

P. G. HAMMERTON.

THE HABIT OF WORK

THE place of habit in life can hardly be overestimated. Habit works a groove for us into which we fall easily and in which we move swiftly, so that the great bulk of our actions are done automatically, and the whole trend of our life is established. Habit cuts a pathway from the brain through the nerve-centres, until after a time a thing is done almost mechanically. We do not stop to think how we will walk when we want to go anywhere. We have laboriously acquired the art of walking, till it is done without any conscious attention. The law extends its sway over every region of life. We have gone on doing acts and making judgments along a certain line till it could be foretold what we will do on any one occasion.

THE HABIT OF WORK

No wonder that all moralists make much of the importance of the formation of habits. It is the way character is formed, and life is moulded, and destiny is fixed. What can match it for importance? It is "by reason of use," as the Apostle says, that "the senses are exercised"; by reason of use the body is developed; by reason of use the mind is colored and twisted and shaped; by reason of use the soul prays and communes and grows in grace; by reason of use each is made the person he is. Even natural disposition, of which we make so much when we speak of heredity, is only a tendency till habit takes it and sets it and hardens it and drives it to a settled goal.

Habit is the process by which acts and thoughts and feelings are organized into life. There is nothing that is outside of this law in business or art or morality or religion. "The harper is not made otherwise than by harping, nor the

just man otherwise than by doing just deeds," says Aristotle with his keen insight into the ethical interests of life. And it is not merely in such specialized lines that habit tells, as when a man sets himself to be a skilled musician, or an exact scholar, or a master of an art, or a just man. It touches us all along the line, never leaving us at any point, but ceaselessly making its mark. Everything counts, registering its effects in the mysterious region of nerve-cells and fibres, and has its corresponding result on mind and character. There is a dreadful warning to youth in this, a warning which all moralists give with passionate earnestness. Every observer of life has the same story to tell, every psychologist has the same sermon to preach, every physician has the same moral to point. Evil assumes its despotic sway gently and insidiously at the beginning of habit. It moves by little and little, till it enthrones itself in the nerve-structure itself.

THE HABIT OF WORK

Says R. L. Stevenson: "Evil was called youth till he was old, and then he was called Habit."

We usually hear of the evil of this great force, the power of bad habits and the difficulty of breaking them. Habit is spoken of as if it were a diabolic influence menacing us on every side. We forget that it is a law of life designed for its best interests. We forget that it is full of good and blessing, and is meant not to destroy but to conserve and strengthen human life. If this force is meant as a preservative, it is in its deepest intention an inducement to good habit; and the law is as strong on this side as on the other. It ought always to be remembered that the odds are on the side of health and good; and in every sincere moral endeavor we put both nature and God on our side. If by reason of use evil can lay hold and grasp the mastery, so by reason of use good also grows — faith, and love, and moral

vigor, and spiritual vision. By reason of use good habits attain and secure and increase good.

There is no habit more important than the habit of work, because it is open to all of us in our place and degree, and because to most the working hours mean a big slice of our lives. We will work all the more intelligently if we look at the hopeful side of this sphere of life, and if we see how it is linked on to moral life generally, how the law of habit uses it to bless and strengthen the whole man. Professor James closes a chapter in his Psychology with a passage which I cannot refrain from quoting, because for one thing he is speaking from the strict scientific standpoint, and because it presents the hopeful and obverse side of the power of habit. "As we become permanent drunkards by so many separate drinks, so we become saints in the moral, and authorities and experts in the practical and scientific spheres, by so many sepa-

rate acts and hours of work. Let no youth have any anxiety about the upshot of his education, whatever the line of it may be. If he keep faithfully busy each hour of the working day, he may safely leave the final result to itself. He can with perfect certainty count on waking up some fine morning to find himself one of the competent ones of his generation in whatever pursuit he may have singled out. Silently, between all the details of his business, the *power of judging* in all that class of matter will have built itself up within him as a possession that will never pass away. Young people should know this truth in advance. The ignorance of it has probably engendered more discouragement and faintheartedness in youths embarking on arduous careers than all other causes put together."

But apart from the ambition to become competent — though there is not such a plethora of completely competent ones in any line of activity as to make us

want to depreciate such an ambition — the value of assiduous and faithful and regular work is that it accumulates moral force, which not only tells by success in the particular occupation, but gives steadiness and backbone to the whole character. The beauty of this is, that it does not matter what we are working at; in work we are creating habit which is sending a stream of healthful influence over the whole life, and is strengthening the complete character. We are bringing training and discipline to bear on our entire self. It also aids all other good habits, and is an agent to fight against any bad habit that may already have taken possession. Such discipline is absolutely necessary for moral ends as well as for practical. The bow must not be bent too much nor too long; but *bent* it must be, to be a bow at all and not a useless stick.

Nothing will make up for the want of this habit of work, either in the particu-

lar line or in the effect on the character. No brilliance or quickness or cleverness or special aptitude can make up for want of it. There is a profound truth in the old fables, like that of the hare beaten by the tortoise even in its own line of running. Sir Joshua Reynolds, who preached this doctrine untiringly, says in his Second Discourse on the Method of Study: "If you have great talents industry will improve them; if you have but moderate abilities industry will supply their deficiency. Nothing is denied to well-directed labor; nothing is to be obtained without it. Not to enter into metaphysical discussions on the nature or essence of genius, I will venture to assert that assiduity unabated by difficulty and a disposition eagerly directed to the object of its pursuit, will produce effects similar to those which some call the result of natural powers." There should be some necessary qualification here, especially in speaking about art. It might tempt

some, who have no aptitude, to think that labor alone is enough for any branch of work.

There is truth in Hazlitt's criticism that industry alone will only produce mediocrity, and mediocrity in art is not worth the trouble of industry. Efforts of course may be misguided and end in inevitable failure. Application the most laborious can never take the place of the initial gift, without which high art is impossible. But allowing for this, Sir Joshua's preaching of industry and the persistent habit of labor may well be taken to heart. Careless slovenly work is responsible for more failures in art than any other cause. Men trust to what they call their genius, and many a gifted artist has never come to his kingdom because he has never learned to toil. It is one of the subtlest temptations in all productive work, whether it be painting pictures, or writing books, or preparing sermons, or pursuing any subject of study, to trust

to happy inspirations, with the result that desultory efforts alternate with long spells of indolence. It not only hurts the work, but it hurts the morale of the worker.

There is no finer lesson from the lives of many scientific workers of our time than that of the patient investigation and tireless labor with which they pursue their branch of truth. Darwin, in a letter to Romanes, refers to this as a necessity if a man is to advance any science at all. He writes, "Trollope in one of his novels gives us a maxim of constant use by a brickmaker, 'It is dogged as does it,' and I have often and often thought that this is the motto for every scientific worker." Here in its own degree, in the sphere of scientific truth as in the sphere of spiritual truth, it is by reason of use that the senses are exercised to discern good and evil. To accept our work as part of our duty, to cultivate it as a habit, is to safeguard our lives from many a mistake and error, and

even from many a sin. We are traitors to our opportunities and gifts unless we make them the servants of habit.

Many illustrations could be culled from the lives and writings of great men, showing how they cultivated this habit till it was ingrained both in their work and in their characters. Take just one other illustration, this time a very different type of man from Sir Joshua Reynolds or Darwin — Lord Macaulay, whose work is often ignorantly thought facile and shallow. One thing certainly in it is its amazing industry, the patience and energy with which he carried on his historical investigations, whether we accept his conclusions or not. Thackeray gives him deserved credit in this. "Take at hazard any three pages of the Essays or History: and glimmering below the stream of the narrative you, an average reader, see one, two, three, a half-score of allusions to other historical facts, characters, literature, poetry, with which you are ac-

quainted. Your neighbor, who has *his* reading and *his* little stock of literature stowed away in his mind, shall detect more points, allusions, happy touches, indicating not only the prodigious memory and vast learning of this master, but the wonderful industry, the honest humble previous toil of this great scholar. He reads twenty books to write a sentence; he travels a hundred miles to make a line of description." This is no exaggeration. We see from his private journal the terrible toil he pledged himself to undertake for the writing of the second part of his history — visits to Holland, Belgium, Scotland, Ireland, France; ransacking Dutch and French archives; turning over thousands of pamphlets; exploring in libraries; soaking his mind in the literature of the period.

True success in working will only come from treating work itself as an art, the best methods of which have to be learned

and practised. A man must bring himself into discipline before he becomes a perfect instrument for his work. No great work of art is possible without previous training in the art of work. When the habit of industry is ingrained in a man's nature he has mastered the art, although his methods of working may be peculiar to himself. Illustrations from literature are specially valuable in treating of this subject, because it is a sphere in which a man is usually thought to be altogether dependent on intuition and inspiration. We speak vaguely of "genius" as explaining any achievement in writing; but we only need to know a little of the inner literary history of any time or country to see what toil lies back of what we call genius.

Even those forms of art which appear most spontaneous, such as poetry and music, are not struck off at a flash, or if any single piece of work seems to be so struck off, that is made possible by years

of past training. Improvisation can only be done by one who is a master of his art. Even Shakespeare, who is often spoken of as an improvisatore, was a careful artist, as can be seen by comparing the first edition of one of his plays with the later editions. This can also be seen in the remarkable growth and intellectual development displayed in the order of his works which has been at least approximately established by critics. Beginning with adaptations of other plays, improving upon every model he took, his growing power in dramatic art and in rich mellow wisdom can be traced.

To speak of any man as a careful artist does not mean that every piece of work needs to be retouched and gone over again and again with painstaking industry; but that the capacity to do anything with finish and delicacy, however easily, has come from previous years of training. Tennyson's *Crossing the Bar* was written in his eighty-first year on

a day in October when the suggestion for it came to him. He showed the poem to his son, who said, "That is the crown of your life's work." He answered, "It came in a moment." But no one as a rule put such fastidious and exacting care into his work as did Tennyson, correcting and polishing and revising. In all great art we are deceived by the appearance of ease, with no joints and no marks of the file anywhere. We see the artist's finished work, but we do not see the hundreds of sketches made for that work, and all the training of eye and hand and taste without which the work would have been impossible. The capacities have been brought into efficiency by intense and persistent labor. When we look on a great completed work, such as Milton's *Paradise Lost*, or Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, or Michael Angelo's Last Judgment — to take great achievements in different spheres — we are inclined to forget all that led up to

them. We think of them as a kind of miracle outside cause and effect, and attribute them vaguely to the inspiration of genius. An unremitting habit of work was one of the secrets which made such achievements possible. This is not to say that if any man will only persist in similar intense toil he will rival Milton's epic; but it does mean that without such toil the epic would never have seen the light of day. Only through habit will the intellectual concentration needed for any high work become part of a man's endowment.

Even style, which is thought to be in a special degree a heaven-born gift, can only be perfected by the scrupulous training of fastidious taste. It is difficult to say what are the qualities which give distinction to style — a delicacy of ear, sensitiveness to the music of words, a sort of instinctive knowlege of the value of vowels and consonants in the building of a sentence — but such a gift remains

only an aptitude till it has received careful discipline. If any writer of our time could be called a "stylist" it was Robert Louis Stevenson, and we might just have accepted it as one of his natural gifts if he had not so frankly revealed the long training to which he subjected the gift. There were years of labor before he had his instrument ready for its work. Even after he attained fame he would write an article seven or eight times over, and in his early days he toiled terribly in learning to write, "playing the sedulous ape" to many masters. In a letter to a friend he wrote, "I imagine nobody had ever such pains to learn a trade as I had; but I slogged at it day in and day out; and I frankly believe (thanks to my dire industry) I have done more with smaller gifts than almost any man of letters in the world." Genius cannot be explained as an infinite capacity to take pains, for without that something we call genius the pains will be wasted; but a passion

for an art which shows itself in such a way is a presumptive evidence of genius, sufficient at least to go on with.

In the whole matter of habit, decision is the master-key. We must learn to act on the spur. The hardest thing is to begin, to overcome the inertia and mental sluggishness. Some men are always preparing for work, which usually means postponing any serious effort and ends in a mere waste of time. There are many ways of deluding ourselves about our industry, and ministering all the time to our innate indolence. Especially in intellectual work it is easy to put off beginning a task with the excuse that we are not ready for it, that we have not read and thought enough, that we are not in the mood at present, or that we need to make more preparation. We go on improving our implements for work which is never attempted, as if an artisan were to be perpetually sharpening his tools and never

putting them to any practical use. The worst of it is that indecision like this has an effect on the character, and weakens the whole capacity. No new habit can be begun without a hard struggle, or continued without constant effort. It will be all the better if there is at the beginning some enthusiasm, a definite resolution to pursue some task in worthy fashion; but watchful and jealous care is needed before the habit is formed. Later on, when the apprenticeship may be said to be completed, it works almost automatically. The laboriousness of any work is lessened by the dexterity which comes from habit. As we accustom ourselves to the work, we gain power not only over our material, but over ourselves. This at least is certain, that nothing is permanently secured to us till it passes into a habit.

A good rule is to do one's work for each day, realizing that sufficient for the day is its evil and its good. If we look

too far ahead at all the work that lies before us, we lose courage and are apt to despair of ever being able for it. This is particularly true of any large subject we have set before ourselves to master. If we see too much we may give up heart; whereas the day's work can be done, and with daily progress even the longest journey is accomplished. The triumph is the habit, not the goal to be reached. One of the great lessons of life is to learn not to do what one likes, but to like what one does. Habit creates this liking; for when we do a thing well and easily we cannot be robbed of a certain pleasure and satisfaction.

Another principle of the art of working is to accustom oneself to take advantage of portions of time that seem too small for serious work. The concentration which habit induces makes it possible to use even scraps of time for some intellectual interest or for some useful service. One of the secrets of Mr.

THE HABIT OF WORK

Gladstone's untiring activity was his regularity and economy of time. His motto seemed to be, Never be doing nothing. At a railway station or at odd times, when others would be waiting listlessly, out would come the inevitable book to enrich his mind. In Newman Hall's *Autobiography* an incident is told of him in 1864, when a Cabinet Minister and one of the busiest of men. "The rector of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields visited one of his parishioners, a street sweeper, who was ill, and being asked if anybody had been to see him, replied 'Yes, Mr. Gladstone.' 'What, Gladstone?' 'Why, Mr. Gladstone himself. He often speaks to me at my crossing, and missing me, he asked my mate if I was ill and where I lived, and so came to see me and read the Bible to me.'" It was the literal following of the apostolic injunction, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men"; but the opportunity needs to be seized, bought up

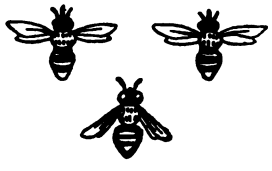
with the avidity of a merchant on the alert for a good purchase.

Success in the art of working depends very much on method. It is not possible, however, to dogmatize about what are the right methods, as here more than anywhere else one man's food is another man's poison. Anthony Trollope's methods of working would drive some authors crazy. He tells us in his *Autobiography* that when he commenced a new book he prepared a diary, and entered into it day by day the number of pages he wrote, so that if at any time he slipped into idleness for a day, the record was there staring him in the face and demanding increased labor to supply the deficiency. He allotted himself so many pages a week and made every page contain two hundred and fifty words, and prided himself on completing his work exactly within the proposed dimensions and within the proposed time. Publishers, editors, and printers would certainly have

a more peaceful time if all writers were as methodical and as considerate as Trollope! He would not allow that there was any difference in kind between authorship and any other craft, such as that of the shoemaker. What the author wants, along with every other workman, is a habit of industry, and he states it as his experience that a man can always do the work for which his brain is fitted if he will give himself the habit of regarding his work as a normal condition of his life. "I venture," he concludes, "to advise young men who look forward to authorship as the business of their lives, even when they propose that that authorship be of the highest class known, to avoid enthusiastic rushes with their pens, and to seat themselves at their desks day by day as though they were lawyers' clerks; — and so let them sit until the allotted task shall be accomplished."

There is, no doubt, much force and

truth in the advice, but because such methods suited Trollope it does not follow that they should be accepted as sacred principles to which all must bow. There have been men whose whole capacity to produce would be destroyed if they had to conform to these methods. The right method for a man is that which will enable him to do his best work. The one important thing is that he should have a method of his own, and should learn the lesson of industry. From such instances of absorbing devotion to work as have been given in this chapter, all kinds of workers can learn the lesson of what the habit of work can do for a man.



THE MORAL NEED OF WORK

HAVE a lust for thine own work, and thou shalt be safe. — ST. HERMAS.

THE MORAL NEED OF WORK

IN the beautiful nature song (Psalm civ.) one of the most vivid of all the pictures is the contrast drawn between night and day. "Thou makest darkness and it is night; wherein all the beasts of the forest creep forth. The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God. The sun ariseth, they get them away, and lay them down in their dens. Man goeth forth unto his work, and to his labor until the evening." Man's place in the divine purpose is as children of the day walking and working in the light. The contrast is very fine between the prowling beasts, fearful, restless, smitten to their dens by a touch of the sun, and the labor of man calm and cheerful, pursued in the day-time. Peaceful habitual

work is in this picture accepted as the natural lot of man, in which he is fulfilling the purpose of God with regard to him. Man must work as a natural necessity, and it is well that it is so to most. It is the law of life that we must work to eat. But work is not only a necessity to most of us for obvious reasons, but for a deeper reason is a necessity for all who would live a sane life.

This does not mean the narrow limiting of work to manual labor. Society is an organism very complex, with many a place to be filled. The world cannot dispense with leaders any more in industry than in politics and thought and religion. What we need in trade as well as in statecraft is a conception of the commonweal. There is the sweat of the brain as well as of the brow. Does not the scholar work, though he seem detached from men, if in the loneliness of study he seek to find truth for the life of the world? Is not the artist a

worker who tries to reveal the soul of beauty for the world's joy? Work must be understood in its widest sense, but is a moral necessity in some form or other. In its deepest meaning it is service of God and of man, and from that there is no reprieve. If man must work in order to live, it is also true that he must work in order to live well.

It is a mistake to think that diligence is too mundane a virtue and too worldly a matter to receive such high treatment. We cannot dismiss the subject thus easily, as if it had no connection with the moral life. Both the value of a life and its result are summed up in character; and character is built up by the manner of doing ordinary work, and at the same time finds its outlet in the doing of it. Nothing in life is morally unimportant, and few things are of more importance than the great tract of life represented by our work. It is foolish therefore to look upon any form of industry as merely

a matter of economics with little or no relation to ethics, or as if it could be at best only prudential morality.

The experience of all time teaches that work is a law of life, not merely as a practical necessity, but as a moral law. A serious occupation diligently pursued is necessary for a sane and wholesome and happy life. Words of the Fourth Commandment often overlooked are, "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work." They have an essential connection with the preceding injunction. The day of rest is to be kept for the sake of the six days of labor. Rest is enjoined as part of the moral law, but one of its functions is as a preparation for the needful toil to follow. Work is part of the commandment, closely connected with the moral law, and the connection is not an accidental one. Work is moral, and serves a moral function in the training of men. It is, indeed, the great civilizing agency. The necessity

to work for daily bread is the root from which all advancement, material, mental, and spiritual, has sprung. Without this necessity there would be no progress, but a constant retrogression to the animal stage. All our arts and sciences and inventions and knowledge are due to this. We are driven on by our human needs.

Negatively, there is moral need of work in guarding against evil. Nothing can avert the inevitable degradation which follows idleness. Plenty without labor is a curse both to individuals and to the country. In climates where the earth is bountiful and little labor is needed for a subsistence, the raee is enervated and there is no spur to progress. The worst forms of immorality are only nursed in idleness. Life cannot be kept sweet and true apart from the filling up of time by useful labor. An idle and luxurious life has its penalty in the increasing burden of finding new forms of amusement, and

it is not to be wondered at if these forms step over the line fixed by morality. Mr. Godkin in his *Problems of Modern Democracy* speaks strongly of what he thinks the inevitable connection of idleness with immorality, when the chief aim of life is a search for new forms of excitement and amusement. "The murders, the duels, or the elopements which every now and then occur, impressive as they are, give but a slight idea of the moral turmoil which goes on below the surface. Every year contributes its list of catastrophes of which the world never hears, of work made hopelessly repulsive on the very threshold of life, of family peace destroyed beyond recovery, of affections irretrievably diverted from their old and lawful channels, of honest worth covered with ridicule, of high aspirations quenched in a swash of triviality or childish gaiety. The worship of wealth, in its coarsest and most undraped form, too, that is, wealth as a purveyor of meat, drink, clothing, orna-

mentation, which goes on in this *milieu*, 'makes hay' of all noble standards of individual and social conduct."

When it becomes possible for a large section of the community to dispense with work, as in the late Roman Empire, when the ideals of life have no place for honest toil and when labor is looked on as a humiliation, the degradation of that people is instant and swift. Of course, excessive and improper work is evil, and one of the lessons we have to learn as a community is that cheapness got at the expense of all that is human in man is a curse to the whole society. Even beauty achieved by the degradation of men, as some of the monuments of the art of antiquity reared by slave labor, is never a gain, but an unspeakable loss. The greatest moral loss came upon those who used such labor to give themselves ease. When there is no necessity for work in the sense of material necessity we soon find that there is a moral necessity; and men,

who are not driven on by the spur of material need, have to invent interests and occupations with which to fill up their lives. "Six days shalt thou labor and do work" is a law written on the very physical constitution; and a healthy man who cannot find something better to do will play cricket or golf all day if only for an occupation.

Even for health of body work is necessary, and highest in the list, instead of lowest as we usually put it, manual labor must be placed. Most men who have had to do brain work all their lives have sometime or other wished they had been taught some trade, something they could do with their hands. The wisdom of the old Jews in teaching their children a handicraft is acknowledged by all. Especially when skill and art is possible, is such work desirable for a contented, happy moral life. Burton gives idleness credit as a great cause of Melancholy, the evil disease which he diagnosed and illustrated so

copiously. He calls melancholy a disease familiar to all idle persons, an inseparable companion to such as live at ease and have no calling or ordinary employment to busy themselves with. "As ferns grow in untilled grounds and all manner of weeds, so do gross humors in an idle body. A horse in a stable that never travels, a hawk in a mew that seldom flies, are both subject to diseases, which left to themselves are most free from any such incumbrances. An idle dog will be mangy, and how can an idle person think to escape?" It is an accepted and proved doctrine among us that health of body depends on the proper exercise of our powers such as work gives. For mere sanity idle men must devise substitutes for work in sports and recreations — pastimes we call them, as if there were nothing to be done with time except get it to pass agreeably.

We know how much health is dependent on the natural exercise of all the powers; and if idleness can cause sickness

of body, it is also responsible for much sickness of soul. Many a sullen mood and evil vapor and querulous temper would disappear through contact with the realities of life — to say nothing of the shameful sins and follies bred in a society given over to pleasure, without the steadying influence of any serious occupation. The spur of poverty has not always been an evil. It has often been a blessed though sometimes a painful necessity. It is a terrible calamity, though not usually thought so, when a man is deprived of the necessity to work, if he is at the same time too weak a man not to be driven on by the moral necessity. A nobleman, a fair amateur painter, once showed a picture of his to Turner, who said, "My lord, you only need poverty to make you a very excellent painter." There is some wisdom as well as wit in the judgment.

If work usually means health of body, much more does it mean health of mind.

THE MORAL NEED OF WORK

Objectless, effortless life is a poor thing. Its aim is not to give something as a contribution to the world's welfare, but to get as much as possible for self. Even when that seems possible through the want of any pressing need for real work, it is a failure. The most unhappy lives are idle ones. "Life would be tolerable but for its pleasures" is a cynical French saying, the truth of which, however, is amply borne out in the ennui of many a jaded pleasure-seeker. This was the worst complaint of Louis XIII. When asked about his health he would say, "Bad; I am bored." He would sometimes take one of the courtiers to a window and say, "Monsieur, let us weary ourselves together." To a healthy man work gives flavor to life, and that is the reason why men often make a toil of pleasure, seeking appetite and happiness from sport, turning playing into working. Idleness infallibly ends in disgust, and only work of some kind makes life truly livable. Young Prince Henry

of Shakespeare's plays is set forth at first as an idle and somewhat profligate youth careless of his position, but when he is wakened up to his folly and to the responsibility which he should have, he is described as getting sick of his useless life, and declares,

> If all the year were playing holidays,
> To sport would be as tedious as to work.

It represents a young man whose heart was right, realizing that there is a man's part for him to play, that there are interests and occupations which give a happiness that idle pleasure-seeking fails to give.

Some of the hardest-working men in the world, though sometimes their work is below the surface and unknown, are men who do not need to work in the ordinary sense. They are to be found sometimes as public servants in political life, or doing social and philanthropic work, or as students and scholars, often working so hard and so long as would

open the eyes of outsiders if they knew. Motives such as ambition may come in, but behind it there is that need of work to make them and keep them strong and true men. All of us, at least theoretically, admit the value of work to redeem life. It gives purpose and meaning of a sort, if it does not give dignity. Even when work is selfish in its motive, or when it is forced by necessity and not by will, it still carries with it a certain purifying and steadying power. As Carlyle taught his generation: "Idleness alone is without hope. There is endless hope in work were it even work at making money." Amid all his lamentation he felt that the hope for England lay in the fact that it was peopled by a noble, silent, working people, who only needed to be wisely led to spend their busy practical genius on worthy objects.

There is a moral danger of idleness even to good people, making them undis-

ciplined and fussy, easily taken up with petty things. St. Paul wrote in indignation to the Thessalonians, when he heard that some of them had given up their ordinary employments in the intensity of their religious feelings, "When we were with you, this we commanded you that if any would not work neither should he eat." Even in the interests of so-called religion, to break off from the common task and lot of man meant disorder and unrest and all manner of evils. The express purpose of giving up work was to prepare by quiet contemplation for the coming of their Lord, but strangely enough the means taken for attaining that purpose defeated itself. It was found that those who gave up their ordinary occupations, instead of becoming more prayerful, and more peaceful in their faith, became busybodies, meddling with other people's business, flighty and unsettled in their ways, a public nuisance to their quiet neighbors who were doing

their own immediate duty. It is one of life's little ironies that this should be so, and yet we see how naturally it comes about. Having freed themselves from the restraint and discipline of common work, they only became more unsettled in their habits. Though their special design was to have more opportunity to grow more truly quiet in heart and life, the practical result was that they neither became quiet themselves nor would allow other people to be quiet. They became censorious of others, whose holiness was questioned since they went on with the customary fulfilment of duty. Apart from the subtle temptation which history shows us awaits all such attempts to reach sanctity by retirement from daily common work, there are many pressing temptations from the mere idleness. St. Paul knew well that all sorts of moral disorders would arise from such a state of affairs; as the old couplet which was instilled into us in our childhood has it

with more truth than poetry, "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do" — to say nothing of idle tongues! Idleness and fussiness indeed are commonly seen together. If we have not found how to possess our soul amid all the duties of life, we will never find the secret by merely resigning from the place of duty.

It is not to be supposed that the chief moral value of work is a negative one in guarding against evil. It is a positive necessity also in developing good. Work is a great instrument for the discipline of character which we cannot afford to forego, and this discipline is not confined to some special sort of work such as that specially designated religious. It refers to the ordinary duties and common tasks of our daily occupation, the zeal and energy and alertness and honesty and uprightness of our business, the spirit in which we work, the manner in which we get through our days. Spiritually it

makes little difference what our work is; it is the manner of our doing it. A scavenger may be a truer public servant than a cabinet minister.

It is of course well to seek the most suitable spheres of action for our particular capacities, and well that our work should be congenial and in keeping with the bent of our inclination, if only because we will then do much better and lasting work. There is always a danger when men do not find pleasure in their everyday work; for there arises a constant tendency to seek pleasure elsewhere, a pleasure which is not so pure and wholesome. But the moral value of work does not depend on pleasure. Even when it seems against the grain, if it be the fruit of an ennobling sense of duty it brings its own reward. There are men in business, whose tastes lie entirely in something else, who yet feel morally bound to it through responsibility for others; and it has been a discipline of character which

has made men of them. After all, the important thing is not the kind of work a man does, but its effect on life and character.

We often think that if we only had a more suitable sphere, if we were rid of some limitations with which we are hampered, our lives and our work would be better; and sometimes we even fear that we have mistaken our vocation. This is often just a selfish longing or the craving of personal ambition. With other opportunities we might make more of our lives for our profit, but it does not follow that we would make more of them for the higher ends of existence. "I have wasted my life in laboriously doing nothing at all," said Hugh Grotius, the great Dutch jurist, historian, and theologian. That was only the true soul of the man coming out, but even if by any chance he could have made more of his life in some other sphere it does not follow that it would be a better life. Any life which is spent

laboriously in service cannot be wasted. To the very best and worthiest such a fear of having mistaken his vocation can come. Isaiah makes even the ideal servant of God exclaim, "I have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for nought and in vain." But in spite of that feeling, just because his work was done truly and sincerely he was able to continue, "yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God."

When speaking of the moral duty of labor we are met with a further theoretical difficulty which arises chiefly because of the subdivision and specialization in all modern industry. Culture, we are assured, is only possible to those who are not dragged into the narrowing condition of being compelled to do a special kind of work. It is true that there is a culture from which the ordinary worker is shut out, the sweetness and light which come from an extended knowledge of literature and art, the refinement of in-

tellect and taste. But that after all is only on the surface of life, the polishing of an instrument. The culture of character and the culture of soul are not confined to any such select class, and indeed moral strength and true wisdom will be found among the unlettered as often as among the highly educated; for character is produced from the ordinary material of life by the common tasks and the daily duties. God does not give us character, He gives us only time; He does not give us results, but only opportunities.

The yoke of work is not merely a moral preservative, but is also an occasion for growth in gracious life. Faithlessness here not only opens the door to evils we would have avoided, but also deprives us of good. Sloth is one of the seven deadly sins labelled by the Church; for it is recognized as one of the great sources of mischief — "the Devil's cushion," as an old writer calls it, inducing

rust of mind and depravity of soul to all who fall victims to it. Its danger lies in what we lose through it, as well as what we suffer. An aimless, useless life brings at the end poverty of soul, with no work of faith and patience of hope and labor of love meeting their harvest and their harvest joy. The slack hands tend to the empty heart, with enough sense of need to desire but nothing to satisfy. "Have a lust for thine own work and thou shalt be safe," said St. Hermas, and many have been able to add their testimony to the safety given by a love of work. When accepted as part of the moral law it does much more than offer safety from temptations; for it brings new sanctions and a new motive.

Industry from this point of view becomes just another name for conscience. Without this moral sense we so easily fritter away our strength, and squander our time, and have nothing left for our

work but the dregs of our power. Conscience has been abused by being limited to speculative difficulties about right and wrong, the settling of questions of casuistry. It too often has lost its relation to actual and common life. We need more conscience put into our daily work, and in this connection conscience is simply industry. Some men of delicate, refined conscience in matters of abstract morality are traitors to it in their everyday work. If we are not making our work a discipline for our character, if it has no moral contents to us, our diligence will be barren of real fruit. The true nobility of life is honest, earnest service, the strenuous exercise of our faculties, with conscience in our work as in the sight of God who gives us our place and our tools and our work.

THE DUTY OF WORK

THE virtue of a man ought to be measured, not by his extraordinary exertions, but by his everyday conduct. — PASCAL.

THE DUTY OF WORK

IT might seem unnecessary to speak of duty in this connection. We are held in the grip of a great physical necessity, and to the great majority at least there is no reprieve. What is gained by proving that we ought to work from a sense of duty, since we *do* work, and some suffer from excessive labor? We have got to work, and that seems an end of it. This feeling is natural, especially to those who carry a heavy load. But we might as well say, Why speak of life? — we have got to live, and that is an end of it; or of death? — we have got to die, and that is an end of it. True, we have got to live and to die, but everything depends on how we live and die. So, we have got to work (most of us), but everything

depends on how we work. There is vast difference between blindly doing a thing which is necessary and understanding the reasons why it is necessary. We surely should have some intelligent grasp of such a universal fact as work, and be able to bring to bear on it noble motives.

Even though we imagine it will not make much difference to the work, it will make a difference to the worker if his motive and spirit be high or low. For example, if we work as a matter of routine into which we were pushed when young and which we carry on mechanically, or if our only thought is to get a living or to make money, these are all different from working from a sense of duty or for the sake of love. It is true that the man who works even from a lower motive is better than the man who will not bestir himself, and who looks upon himself as unfortunate because the plums do not fall ripe into his open mouth, and who hopes to catch larks if

the heavens will only oblige him by falling. The one has some notion of cause and effect, and the other is living in a false world without a glimpse of moral law. So, in like manner the man who works from a high motive enters a region shut to him who may work as hard or harder, but who has no vision of the inner meaning of things.

Further, there is another temptation which makes such a subject useful, the temptation to consider our work as outside of our moral life. To many, work is looked on as just a means of gaining a livelihood, and the real life begins where that ends. The result is that men live in sections, with a compartment for religion, and one for business, and one for home and social relations. This is responsible for much false thinking and false living, and is responsible for many of the inconsistencies in good men which puzzle the world and grieve the Church. It is not merely a failure of religion, failure to

bring religion down to the details of business, but it is a failure to see that business and work are an essential sphere of religion. Work to many is done to get the wherewithal to live, instead of being, as it should be, itself an appointed manner of living, one of the activities of our inner life. How common, for example, it is for men to think that when they have made a living they can then devote themselves to higher things! Plato in the *Republic* has two lines of dialogue illustrative of this.

"Have you heard of the saying of Phocylides, that as soon as a man has a livelihood he should practise virtue?"

"Nay, he said, I think that he had better begin somewhat sooner."

The true view of our livelihood is to use it as a sphere for developing virtue. A man's character is often made or marred by how he approaches his daily work; and his character is certainly revealed by the spirit in which his work is done. We

are just the raw material out of which men are made. We have to undergo the process of making; we have to submit to the discipline that fashions us to higher ends; and our daily work is an approved instrument for this purpose. It is an important part of the great moral training, how important we can see by thinking of the large place in our lives our ordinary work takes up. It is absurd to think that we can cut this out from the region of moral duty without serious loss.

The first element then is the duty to ourselves, not merely to gain an honest subsistence and earn our living as we say, but to gain our moral character, and come under the sweep of the forces that help to make men. Thus we must accept duty not for the sake of what we can get or even give, but what we can also *become*. To attain any great end men willingly submit to the discipline designed to achieve it. The athlete un-

dergoes the long and strict régime approved for his special training. The scholar can only become such by one way, and there is no royal road to learning. The great end of character must also be pursued by submitting to daily discipline; and work accepted as part of moral training lifts the whole life to a higher level. To achieve this, work must not be done perfunctorily as if it did not matter much how it was done, or as a disagreeable physical necessity, but must be looked on consistently as a means to a moral end.

It is not possible to do justice to all the rich contents of such discipline. It has of course, as we have seen, a negative value in warding off many evils, clearing the mind of temptations, filling up an otherwise empty life with occupations and good habits. But there are positive blessings in the building of a steadfast character. By the very compulsion against which we often kick we learn

what obligation is, since we are brought face to face with the idea of *must*, which should also lead us to the idea of *ought*; and that is a lesson which is cheaply got at almost any price. We learn our limitations and the limitations of our lot; and the first important step in the mastery of life, as in the mastery of any art, is to accept the essential limitations.

The discipline of our daily work should breed in us habits of self-restraint, patience, faithfulness, obedience to law, an ordered life. Even in a lot of drudgery there are possible some valuable personal virtues, such as integrity of mind, a real independence in what seems a hopelessly dependent state, generosity, and helpfulness. We cannot overlook the fact also that strength of character can be produced by the untoward circumstances enforced on a man against his will and desire. A narrow corner of life, when possessed by a supreme sense of duty, may be an opportunity for a larger and

deeper moral achievement than would be likely in a spacious lot under the sunshine of smiling fortune. Thus from this high point of view, our daily work is first of all a duty to self, for the sake of one's own character and the discipline of life.

Another great and all-embracing principle which we cannot forget without hurting the best quality of our work is that it should be also a duty to our fellows. Our work must in some way be related to what St. Paul calls "brotherly love." In Thessalonica Paul was confronted by a section of his converts refusing to work through what they considered spiritual exaltation, giving themselves up to fervid expectations about our Lord's coming. It was not fit, they thought, that they should be wasting their time and strength on the trivial tasks by which they earned their bread when they might be devoting themselves to what seemed more religious duties.

The results were as might be expected. For one thing, it meant that those who ceased working became a charge on the rest of the Church. They were a nuisance to their industrious brethren and a tax on their good nature and their faith. St. Paul sternly denounces their conduct, and at the same time states one of the principles by which he elevates the whole subject of man's work. He points out bluntly that if they are not working they are living off others. It simply means that they are a burden on those who are humbly going on with their ordinary duties. So, the principle he states as in itself sufficient to justify work is love of the brethren. It is a duty to them to take their share of the burdens of life and not to hamper others needlessly. His appeal for industry is: "Touching brotherly love, we beseech you that ye do your own business and work with your own hands, that ye may walk honestly towards them that are

without and that ye may have lack of nothing." No amount of sanctity which might conceivably be attained by such abdication of the duty of work could make up for the selfishness of throwing the burden of their support on their fellows. This is the condemnation of the whole monastic system which grew to such proportions in the Roman Church. The holiness reached thus by casting an extra load on others is at bottom selfishness, however religiously disguised. Christian independence is the other side of Christian charity. Charity has rights as well as duties, and it is the right of charity to demand that it be not called on needlessly and wilfully. It is a shame for Christians to shut up their hearts against need; but it is no less a shame to impose on others. True brotherly love is the cure for both of these sins. Love opens hand and heart; and love will not cast a needless burden on the brethren.

THE DUTY OF WORK

However laborious it be, there is no honor in merely selfish work, designed only to grasp and get and keep. Work needs to be touched by the romance of love to redeem it from ultimate barrenness. There is a great deal of nonsense talked about the dignity of labor, often by men who have never worked hard enough to know the weariness and pain of too much labor. Work does carry with it the dignity of at least a measure of independence, and brings the satisfaction of a piece of work done to the best of one's ability, and is a safeguard from many an evil; but in itself it has no such intrinsic beauty as is sometimes claimed for it. It all depends on its motive and its spirit. The work which has no other end than to make money, for example, is not a thing of dignity, even although it brings some benefits in its train. The toil also, that is done in soulless stupefying fashion from pure necessity, is not a thing to rejoice over as a tribute to the

nobility of humanity. We will never have right ideas of social duty till we recognize that work may be too hard and may bend hearts as well as backs too sorely, as in Burns's description of the cottars,

> Wha drudge and drive, thro' wet and dry
> Wi' never-ceasing toil.

Labor which is only labor is vanity and vexation of spirit.

In the last issue it is only love that gives labor worth. This is true even in the lowest and commonest spheres. To raise work above grossness, to take the sting out of its curse, the thought of working for others must come in. It must be done for love of others. Otherwise, it is only soulless drudgery, or grasping materialism. Toil the most untiring is a poor thing, if it is only inspired by mammon worship, or some other form of self-aggrandizement. On the other hand many a life, which has had little

success and seemingly little joy, has won dignity because the inner source of all its activity has been love. The strong must bear the burdens of the weak, willingly, lovingly, joyfully. St. Paul's noble boast in his farewell address to the elders of Ephesus touches on this motive as an inevitable principle of Christian duty: "Ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities and to them that were with me. I have showed you how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak." After all, much of the world's work is done for love, for wife and children, for the aged, the frail, and the sick. It is the divine tax levied on strength. The true and only dignity of labor is that it be done for love.

But this motive has not carried us far if it only takes us the length of enduring work for the sake of kith and kin. When we say that work is a duty for the sake of others, we mean a larger and wider re-

lationship. The Christian motive transcends the ties of blood, and family, and friendship. So work is a duty to society, and not merely to a few individuals. We owe all we have and are to our fellows, and the only way we have of paying the debt is to take our share of the burden. An English statesman called the wealthy idlers the "dangerous classes," and it is true in every sense; for they are the great argument for socialism; they do more to unsettle the minds of workers than all socialist propagandists put together; and with their luxury and self-indulgence they lower the tone of the whole of society, and corrupt the life of the country, making it weak in the time of trial. The unemployed classes are the dangerous classes at both ends of the scale. Men cannot be idle with safety either to themselves or to the community. We want a higher ideal of social duty and social honor, till all will admit the dishonor of offering no sort of service what-

ever to the common weal. We need to accept the social obligation to take our share of the world's work. One element of the duty of work is simply the duty of sacrifice. It means making a contribution of some sort to the good of the whole body politic, giving a real service to others by bending to the burden of all. Work is a practical acceptance of the truth that no man liveth to himself, and that a self-centred life is a social offence.

It applies also to the *quality* of our work, its faithfulness and honesty and trustworthiness. Shoddy work is not only a wrong to a man's own personal integrity, hurting his character; but also it is a wrong to society. Truthfulness in work is as much demanded as truthfulness in speech. False and sham work of every kind is a sin against brotherly love; for somebody suffers for it somehow. We never can tell who must suffer, as when a ship springs a leak through badly

driven rivets, or when cheapness is got by adulterating food. Truthfulness in work applies all round and in all sorts of work. Some men will steal their master's time who would never steal his money; but perfect honesty has a wider sweep than the narrow limits of our common ethics.

Carlyle was fond of the phrase the Chivalry of labor, by which he meant his vision of the time when the leaders of industry would be captains in the true sense, organizing labor to fight against need and poverty; and the workers be joined to them by something stronger than cash-payment. What is this Chivalry of labor but just a restatement of the Christian motive of brotherly love? Are there any problems in the industrial world which could not be solved by the patient application of that principle? Are there any difficulties so insuperable that they could not be removed by Christian brotherly love?

This is not a counsel of perfection, a thing in the clouds which cannot concern us practically. All our lives come into touch with other lives at some point or other. There is no one who cannot render some service or other to his fellows. It only needs that we each should consider that our conduct is ever affecting some. It only needs that we take our life seriously as a high opportunity, and that we should let the thought of *service* sink into our hearts, redeeming our lives from selfishness, and making them the service of God and of our brethren. Selfish labor is cursed with futility. It cannot even bring happiness when there is no love in it. Goethe makes Faust begin his researches in the magic which brought on the tragedy of his life, because he realized that all his previous labor and learning were useless and gave him no peace of mind. He had studied laboriously, explored philosophy and science and law and medicine, poured over deep theology, but all he knew or

thought he knew seemed unmeaning to him, because he had lost the hope and the desire to instruct and elevate mankind. It is a true touch. Philosophy, and law, and medicine, and science, and theology, and all work whatsoever, are barren without this human relation. They must all be learned and practised for the sake of others. When they lose their contact with life, they grow false, and bring no satisfaction even to the mind of the learner or worker.

This thought of duty to others opens up the region in which work must be done if it is to be of any account. Brotherly love must be one of the motives: it must be done as service. That is the true dignity of labor and the Chivalry of labor, done with conscience because done as in the sight of God, and done with grace because done for others, and done with delight because done for love. When we look upon our daily tasks as playing a part, however humble, in the great common-

wealth, as our contribution to the world, they are lighted up with a new light. Common household duties, the routine of shop or office or mill, the market-place, the student's desk, the physician's round, all cease to be meaningless drudgery, and are all turned into something passing rich and rare when they are transmuted into a labor of love. At the end of life we shall not be asked how much pleasure we had in it, but how much service we gave in it; not how full it was of success, but how full it was of sacrifice; not how happy we were, but how helpful we were; not how ambition was gratified, but how love was served. Life is judged by love; and love is known by her fruits.

Further, we cannot overestimate the dynamic introduced by the thought of a vocation in life, when a man grasps the situation with both his hands. When duty inspires our ordinary occupations and business, we feel that we are called to

do this as truly as ever prophet was called to preach; and so our duty to self in this matter runs into our duty to God. This is the third strand in the rope. The Christian religion thus ennobles the whole subject of work, carries it higher and further as not only duty to our own best selves and as duty to others, but also as duty to God. It is this alone that introduces the element of vocation into our lives, something we are meant to do and to be. We hold our gifts and our capacities from God. Nothing but the power of Christian sentiment is sufficient to make us submit to the self-discipline which we know to be necessary for true working. It alone sets before us the highest motive for action. When conduct is governed by love to God and to man it gets a force to which no other is comparable.

Christian principle in these three lines of duty can alone control the self-interested motives which otherwise would rule

supreme in the actual conditions of life. When we come to see how faithfulness in duty relates us not only to our fellow-men but to God, we come to see that work is not just a physical necessity, not merely a part of the painful lot of man, but part of the *privilege*. And the idler, the selfish man, the man who thinks only of himself and lives only for himself, is self-condemned. As a duty which we owe to God who gave us our opportunities, work is an obligation resting on every man. If we have no need to work for a living, there is all the more obligation to offer our service to the public good in other ways. Leisure is an invaluable gift to a man who accepts his life sacredly, and who is inspired with a sense of duty to God. What splendid examples we have had, and have, in our own country of men giving their energies to unrecompensed work in social, philanthropic, and religious activity. The mainspring of such devotion has been a

sense of duty to God, inspiring consecrated service.

To feel the full weight of this motive we need only compare it with many of the ends which men set before themselves as the inspiring object of all their labor. The commonest of all motives of work in our commercial days is the making of money. That is a legitimate motive enough so far as it goes; but we have to ask the question if it is adequate. In questioning its worth we are going deeper than merely reminding ourselves of the unstable tenure by which we hold all riches, or of its powerlessness to buy love or cheat death, its impotence before the rude shocks that strike the heart of man. We are asking ourselves if it can be called an adequate motive for beings endowed as we are, if we can be satisfied with the net result of a life dignified by no higher purpose. The life itself can be poverty-stricken though the means of living abound. All other selfish motives of la-

bor are cursed with the same vanity, whether it be the thirst for fame or reputation, or to found a family, the pathetic under-current of motive of some of Sir Walter Scott's abundant labors, or any other of the common aims of men. Many of these motives are intermixed with much good. Even the mere money-grubber may have visions of the supposed happiness the fruit of his toil will give to those he loves. But how futile it all is to give grace or beauty to life! The spiritual light thrown by religious duty is needed to redeem work from meanness and from ultimate fatuity.

The great moral education of life is open to us all, if we will put duty before pleasure, and if we will look upon our whole lot in life as a school of divine discipline. It is futile to attempt to live in sections, separating business from religion and work from faith. If, as we bow our neck to the yoke of duty, we are sure that it is appointed us of God, we

will move towards high ends. What has been sown in the long years of labor is reaped in a gain to character. This high doctrine of duty is alone worthy of us, difficult though it be, and alone will make our lives noble. Even when achieved in weariness, when the tired soul would fain lay down the burden, nothing will so renew the strength like the thought of duty. We are perhaps complaining of the drudgery of our life, longing for a larger lot with more of the world's pleasure in it, with more of the uplifting of success, with more beauty and joy and freedom. We say —

> I am so tired, so tired of rigid duty,
> So tired of all my tired hands find to do,
> I yearn, I faint for some of life's free beauty,
> The loose beads with no straight string
> running through.

Yet we know that to give our life meaning and value it needs that straight string of duty, and we know that to be false

to duty is to be false to our own best selves and false to God, while to be true to it is the discipline of sanctification. The school is here, and the door is open.

THE FRUITS OF WORK

THE reward of a thing well done is to have done it. — EMERSON.

Get work, get work;
Be sure 't is better than what you work to get.
E. B. BROWNING.

THE FRUITS OF WORK

ONE of the many Proverbs which inculcate industry does it by contrast between actual labor and mere talk, between the man who works steadily, honestly, seriously, and the man of flighty and indolent nature copious of suggestions and criticisms, who will not put his hand to any definite task. "In all labor there is profit: but the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury." There is a talk which is work, when behind it is the toil of brain and heart. Indeed, the highest and the hardest kind of work in the world might be classed among that of talk, the work of teacher whether by speech or by writing. But we need very little experience of the world and of men to enable us to appreciate the irony of the contrast between the worker and the

talker. We know the man with brilliant suggestions and acute criticisms and endless projects, but with never an ounce of practical result. He spends all his energy in talk, and always means to be doing but never does. The man of theories and promises and words is known to us all — theories without practice, promises without fulfilment, words without work. The futility of this strikes us, as it struck the old proverb-maker. Industry of any kind he could honor, but this industry of the tongue merely tired him, as it tires us. Talk! Talk will not plough fields and gather harvests, will not build houses and ships, will not carry on business and provide for the needs of life.

When we say that in labor there is profit, we naturally think of the material return which labor earns, the gains it receives; and this just as naturally is the chief thing in the mind of the proverb-maker. Industry leads to prosperity. It is good to assure ourselves what steady

industry will do for us, to assure ourselves that in labor there is certain profit. We would not make too much of the natural fruits of work, the temporal good it achieves, the material success we naturally expect from it. To lay too much emphasis on this is to put the emphasis on the wrong thing; but on the other hand it is stupid to despise such profit, as if all life did not have any sort of physical basis. When we come to think of it, we realize that all the material good of the world is built on the profit of labor. There are no fruits of any kind in all our civilization, which are not the fruits of work. The things which are needful in this life from a material point of view are added to us through industry, and only through industry. Neither talk, nor anything else but work, will feed and clothe and shelter.

In the life of the individual also it is a silly affectation to rule out of account as a motive the natural success which

comes from industry. The world is built so that the idle and slothful cannot make anything of it; and the hand of the diligent maketh rich. Still, this side of our subject as a rule is self-evident, and does not need to be elaborated. It is part of ordinary worldly prudence to direct the eyes of the young to such common fruits of work as its temporal good in at least affording a living. But there are other fruits even more important in the long run, other things got by the way, of more lasting worth than any material gains. The great value of work is not for what it earns, but for its education and training of body and mind and soul. It reacts on character, cutting deep into the nature virtues like patience and self-control and courage, establishing habits of concentration and persistence and foresight.

Even great mental gifts are rendered comparatively useless, if they are not tied down to definite tasks. There are

many brilliant men who sparkle and shine with their lips, but who achieve nothing of permanent worth, because they have not bent to the daily discipline of strenuous labor. We cannot accept the famous definition of genius as an infinite capacity for taking pains; for no amount of pains will itself accomplish the highest creative work of genius: but many a genius has brought no profit of any kind either to himself or to the world, simply because he never submitted to the drudgery of work. There have been in England few men of such astounding genius as Coleridge. This is the testimony of all who knew him, and is our testimony also from the brilliant fragments of work he has left; and yet his life is almost tragedy in its barrenness. Even the talk of his lips, though his words were as gold, tended only to moral penury. His plans, and schemes, and endless prospectuses of books he meant to write, his resolutions about the great

work he intended always to begin, make a very pitiful story. It is like clouds and wind without rain, as another proverb has it, full of empty promise. His infirmity of purpose grew on him till he lost all power of decision and all capacity to work ; and he died as he had lived, a nerveless soul. There had not perhaps been a man of greater mind since Shakespeare; and yet in a prayer written by him near the end of his life he had to lament, as all the world has to lament, his unused talents and neglected opportunities.

It is a common matter of observation that the successful man is not always the man with the most ability and the most brilliant powers. These often carry with them a disability, or at least a temptation, to trust to them and make up by feverish haste what has been lost by sluggishness. But every truly great man has in addition to his splendid gifts of mind the still more splendid gift of industry. It creates and strengthens the moral

qualities necessary for sustained work of a high order. Method, perseverance, the self-criticism which can only be satisfied with the best, are only other names for the quality of industry. No true and lasting work can be done except as the result of a long training in the best methods of working. It does not mean that any methods can be a substitute for the original gift; but it does mean that even the greatest gifts need the discipline and development of hard work. Ruskin says on this point: "During such investigation as I have been able to give to the lives of the artists whose works are in all points noblest, no fact ever looms so large upon me, no law remains so steadfast in the universality of its application, as the fact and law that they are all great workers; nothing concerning them is matter of more astonishment than the quantity they have accomplished in the given length of their life; and when I hear a young man spoken of as

giving promise of high genius, the first question I ask about him is always — Does he work?"

The ease with which greatness does its work often deceives. The orator masters his subject and his audience with ease; the artist transfers to the canvas his vision of beauty without effort or seeming strain; the musician pours out his melody spontaneous as a bird. Simplicity and ease are the marks of all great work, but behind it there are years of toil and arduous learning to do with ease what others cannot do at all. Capacity to toil is necessary for the highest work. This does not mean restless ambition, but steady peaceful labor along the line of his genius. The true reward of working is not the material wage it earns in money or position or fame, but the increased and facile power of working. The fruits of labor can only be reaped by steady, well-directed, faithful labor; and the fruits of work are capacity for

better work, but are also fruits of character. The richest gains are not in any outward success, but in the result on the man himself, giving him the habit of application and discipline of thought, and stiffening his power of will. In all labor there is profit, though it cannot be put down in terms of cash. It is profitable to work though there should be no signs of success, no fruits that appear to the eye.

For one thing — to mention some actual benefits apart from this general training of character — one of the fruits of the habit of work is the *independence of mind* it induces. In work we are taken out of ourselves, removed from petty annoyances and all the small personalities that embitter life. No man can be thoroughly miserable who has work to do. The direst misery is the result of a self-centred life. Unhappiness cannot exist in its keenest form where self is

forgotten, and in all work worth doing there is concentration of all the powers, and a forgetfulness of everything except how to do it well. True work means independence of outside criticism and outside interference. A worker has not time to brood over fancied slights; he can forget the world in doing his duty.

Things done well,
And with a care, exempt themselves from fear.

We agitate ourselves with a host of petty worries and chagrins, so petty sometimes that we would be ashamed even to mention the things that annoy us. No true work was ever done in such a mood; and such a mood cannot live in the atmosphere of earnest, serious work. Forget self, and rest comes; we get at once out into the calm. The heart's peace comes of the heart's own bringing; and the way to bring it is to give ourselves to duty simply and humbly. And at the last there is nothing that gives such

satisfaction and independence as the sense of having honestly striven to perform duty. Sir Henry Lawrence, the hero of Lucknow, ever remembered as a savior of the British Empire at the Indian Mutiny, when he lay dying of a mortal wound at Lucknow, asked that his epitaph should be, "Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty." The doing of duty teaches courage and patience and faith; and these bring peace. It makes a man morally independent, strong and able to live his life to God and not to man. Firm adherence to duty can enable a man to do without praise, or encouragement, or adulation from men. It is a refuge from the strife of tongues, from the inept criticisms and evil-speaking of a censorious world. We read in the biography of Robertson of Brighton that at one period of his ministry his sensitive soul was bruised with the opposition and misrepresentation of detractors, and with the no less officiousness of admirers; and

so, shrinking from the stings of a publicity he never sought, he gave himself up to quiet and continuous work as a refuge. He studied and preached and visited, and sought to find a hidden way of life, and by the very irksomeness of work tried to rid himself of what to his temperament was the worse irksomeness of fame. This over-sensitiveness was the great weakness of his character, and it could only be overcome by withdrawing into the region of duty. A touch of self-reliance is required to make the character truly balanced; and self-reliance is the result of self-forgetfulness. A confirmed habit of work gives an independence of mind which enables a man to dispense with many other supports, and enables him to disregard many criticisms which would distract the worker and weaken the work. The petty worries of life can always be at least mitigated thus. Emerson wrote in his *Journal* what was almost part of his faith: "To every reproach I know but

one answer, namely, to go again to my work. 'But you neglect your relations.' Too true, then I will work the harder. 'But you have no genius.' Yes, then I will work the harder. 'But you have detached yourself from people: you must regain some positive relation.' Yes, I will work the harder."

Another of the fruits of this beneficent habit along the same line is that it brings *balm for grief*. Since it gives forgetfulness of self, it can be and is an antidote to pain of heart. It often means the only chance of surcease of sorrow. The very routine and drudgery of daily work have often saved a life from despair. Adherence to duty is a way to attain some measure of peace. However great the sorrow, the needs of living and the duties of living press in, and demand attention. It is well that it should be so; for the very necessity is a lesson in faith. When the cloud creeps over the

heart, when the way is obscured, when the future is unknown and the past seems a failure, when all else is dark, duty is still a light to the feet. It can be done meanwhile. When love itself seems dead, the service of love remains; and to that we are called.

Of course there may be cowardice in thus turning to work from the thought of grief. It may be used as an opiate to deaden pain and forget thought. We use it wrongfully, when we do so faithlessly and bitterly. But when it is accepted humbly as the will of God, it gives peace to turn to something else, which is also the will of God, namely, daily duty. The very habit soothes and heals the bruised heart. In all labor there is this profit, that it gives patience to grief. This is a poor thing if it is taken as a means of forgetting, a narcotic to dull and numb pain; but our whole path is transfigured if we see that we are walking in the way of God's appoint-

ment, simply and sweetly performing His will.

There are many instances in life and literature of the power of work to assuage grief. A sorrow will either unman, or it will brace and nerve, and lift the life in a new access of courage. Sir Walter Scott used work to keep his mind from brooding on the downfall of his life's great scheme. His *Journal* is an unpretentious record of a noble life, revealing his brave true soul. The manner in which he buckled to his task (sometimes when the page he was writing waltzed before his eyes), the manly way in which he faced his trouble, and buried his grief, the patience with intruding visitors when all the time he was aching to get back to work, move us with mingled pity and admiration. With pain of body and sorrow of heart and sickness of soul he battled on, and in his own conduct illustrated the words which long years before he had caused to be carved on his dial-stone at

Abbotsford, "I must work while it is called day; for the night cometh when no man can work." It is in such a trial that a man's true character is revealed. He who has always put conscience into his work will not find the beneficent habit of work fail him at the pinch.

Another of the assured fruits of work is *happiness*. It is the experience of all ages that to make happiness the end of life, the one definite purpose towards which a man strives, is infallibly to lose it. It is bound to result in frittering away life in trivialities, or swamping it in grossness. Yet we cannot leave it out of our scheme, since it is a demand of our very nature. Experience teaches that happiness is got by the way in pursuing other ends, and not by pursuing itself as an end; and one of the accredited means of attaining some measure of happiness is by healthful activity of body and mind. In every well-ordered life there

must be serious occupation for any sort of permanent happiness. The happiest people one meets are always the busy people. The most miserable are those who have to invent frivolous substitutes for some serious employment. We are reminded of the satire of Burns's poem, *The Twa Dogs*, where Luath, the poor man's dog, asks Cæsar, the rich man's dog, if his master and his friends are not the happiest people on earth. It is a sly touch to put that question into the mouth of the poor man's dog. Cæsar replies that he thinks they are not to be envied.

> A country fellow at the pleugh,
> His acres tilled, he 's right eneugh ;
> A country girl at her wheel,
> Her dizzen 's dune, she 's unco weel ;
> But gentlemen, and ladies warst,
> Wi' ev'n-doon want o' wark are curst.

The primal curse is felt by all, who accept it humbly, to be a blessing in disguise. Work is the very salt of life, not only

preserving it from decay, but also giving it tone and flavor. Carlyle never wearied in asserting this — it was one of his best messages to his age — as in these words from his famous Inaugural Address, "Work is the grand cure of all maladies and miseries that beset mankind — honest work which you intend getting done." Every man of knowledge and experience who writes on happiness gives work as one of the pure sources of enjoyment. This is partly because of its intimate connection with health of body; and partly because industry brings peace of mind.

We are so easily led astray here, looking for happiness from getting, rather than from doing and being. Mere receptive happiness, which comes from possessions, from a present easy lot, from æsthetic enjoyment, cannot last. The taste palls on the jaded palate. It needs to be flicked with ever stronger spices. Its end is the hell of ennui, which is the inevitable disease of idleness. This receptive happiness

is the kind we mostly look for, and explains why we are so sadly disappointed. Happiness can only come from obedience to the laws of life, and from the activity which is recognized to be the natural and healthy way of life. Perhaps the most pessimistic, and certainly the saddest, words Ruskin ever wrote are in his fine lecture on the *Mystery of Life and the Arts*, in which he shows how little real guidance in the great mystery of life we have received from even the wisest men, poets and teachers and statesmen and philosophers and the wise practical men; but one thing he is sure of is that industry worthily followed gives peace. Other paths lead to disappointment, but sincere and honest labor means happiness. "Ask the laborer in the field, at the forge, or in the mine; ask the patient, delicate-fingered artisan, or the strong-armed fiery-hearted worker in bronze and in marble and with the colors of light; and none of these who are true workmen will ever tell you that

they have found the law of heaven an unkind one — that in the sweat of their face they should eat bread till they return to the ground; nor that they ever found it an unrewarded obedience if indeed it was rendered faithfully to the command— Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

We just need to look at the facts of our nature to see that man was made for activity; and to break this law is to bring upon us a sure revenge. Only our artificial society with its false ideals could blind us to the truth of this. No permanent happiness is possible which is got at the expense of the laws of nature. There may be, it is true, excessive labor; but when that is so, when work is done with a sense of strain, it is a warning of nature to desist. But more people err on the other side, and look for happiness from pleasure and ease rather than from duty. It is a vain search. Never thus has it been found, as can be seen at a

glance in the unhappy faces of the jaded pilgrims to health-resorts and pleasure-resorts, ever seeking what they never find. It is part of the pathos of our social situation that what the world imagines to represent happiness should cut us off from an essential condition of happiness. We envy those whose position of affluence rids them of the necessity of work; while they find they must invent things to take the place of work, before they can know any peace or true pleasure. We must learn to look for happiness not in our feelings but in our activities, not in our pleasurable emotions but in our service.

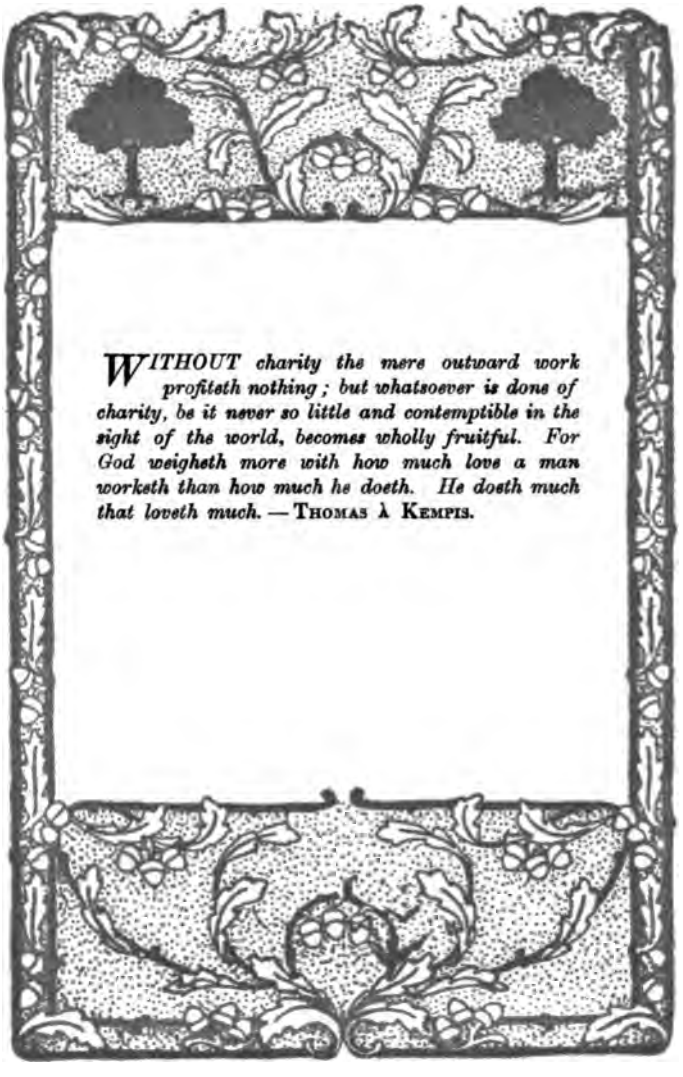
One thing is certain, that, though work itself will not ensure happiness, yet without it happiness is impossible. It is an essential condition of a contented life. This has been the experience of all, and there is no more useful lesson for youth to learn early. It will save him from many an error and from many a sorrow.

THE FRUITS OF WORK

Alexander Dumas in his *Memoirs* thanks a friend of his youth for teaching him the value of work. "You said to me, 'Be sure, my boy, there is something else in life besides pleasure, love, sport, dancing, and all the wild dreams of youth. There is *work:* learn to work — learn, that is, to be happy.' You introduced me to the only friend that consoles us, the friend who is ever at our side, running up to help us at the first sigh, pouring in his balm at the first tear — it was you who made me to know work." There is a little French bombast in these words, but also much truth. Even patient drudgery brings the joy of duty done, and saves from repining and useless despondency. It is perhaps natural that in the great strain of life we should sometimes covet idleness and be envious of the idle. Conditions of labor may be too hard, especially when anxiety about the future is added to it; but idleness is a heavier curse, and ends in sorer misery,

than the severest toil. There is sometimes a misplaced sympathy for the poor. They need sympathy often, but not always for the things in their lot on which the leisured classes sometimes spend their pity. There can be found poor that are rich in all the essentials of true life, and rich that are poor. It is not the work itself which is the hardness of the lot of the poor, and not always the amount of it. The languor of idleness is worse than the worst weariness of toil. The ennui and disgust, which sooner or later attend on idleness, are a less enviable lot than that of even the heavily driven worker. He at least is within the sweep of the beneficent law which has ordained work.

THE IDEAL OF WORK



WITHOUT charity the mere outward work profiteth nothing; but whatsoever is done of charity, be it never so little and contemptible in the sight of the world, becomes wholly fruitful. For God weigheth more with how much love a man worketh than how much he doeth. He doeth much that loveth much. — THOMAS À KEMPIS.

THE IDEAL OF WORK

WE suffer both as individuals and as a society from the lack of an ideal in work. The socialist criticism of existing conditions has much point in it, and we must become ever more open to that criticism so long as we attempt to do the world's business on a merely economic basis. Poets and thinkers have dreamed of a time when men would be bound together by something more worthy and more lasting than self-interest, and there have been brief times when the dream has been realized.

In one of the historical books of the Old Testament there is depicted such a time. After a long period of heathenism in Judah, a reformation was attempted by Josiah towards a purer and more spiritual worship. The temple had been

allowed to fall into disrepair, and Josiah brought before the people the need of restoring it. It was to be a national work. The people were made to feel that it was their concern, something they were bound in honor to do, and not merely a king's gift to them. When the money was gathered the work was started, properly organized with overseers. There was so much zeal and enthusiasm, and such a sense of responsibility resting on all, that we read that the priests did not need to keep accounts, nor jealously see that they got their money's worth of work. It was not a contract transaction, each party on the watch lest they should be cheated. They were able to trust each other, the priests to go to their religious duties, knowing that overseers and workmen had larger thoughts than how they might take advantage. They were bound together by a closer and stronger bond than any mere cash nexus could be. There are things more binding than even

legal contracts. The world has sometimes been able to get its work done by sweeter and nobler methods, and may perchance be able again when we come back to God. In this old-world building operation, the one thing which is seen everywhere is faithfulness. The captains of industry were faithful to the priests; the men were faithful to their masters; and for once Jew could trust Jew. The whole gives the impression of a simpler time, when men were in closer contact with each other, and true heart could meet true heart and keep each other true. When the overseers get their meed of praise, we read "and the men did the work faithfully."

The words call up a scene very pleasant to look on, and suggest dreams for our future sweet to think of. We get glimpses of hope of a time when all hearts shall be as one in the inspiration of a common cause. Cash payment is not the sole relation between man.

Society cannot long exist on that basis. If it were not that there is more than that in our midst, saving salt of nobler thought and larger practice, it could not have existed so long. No man can be wholly paid in money for his work, if it be true work. We cannot buy love, nor pay for it; and without love in all its grades and forms our social life, and even our business life — sacred though it may seem to be to supply and demand — are failures. There are things outside the region of cash payment. Faithful dealing between man and man cannot be bought and sold. Such work is a spiritual thing as well as a material, and money has no currency in such trafficking.

We need an ideal to save our lives from deadly dulness. We need the light of the ideal to inspire us and to ennoble our activities. Otherwise what poor petty drudgery it all is, a meaningless bending of the neck to the yoke. We must make all our occupations truly religious, in-

spired by religious motive. The world's one need is religion. We are perishing for want of God: for want of Him our lives are full of conflicting interests, and selfish schemes, and disputes, and misunderstandings. How are scamped work and unfaithful dealing possible, except because men think themselves out of sight of God?

There are duties which we perform lightly and with ease, extra duties, things to which we are called by inclination and which we perform with pleasure. To most of us our work is usually begun like that: it is our choice, and while our newborn enthusiasm lasts it comes easy to us; but when it loses its novelty it does not lose its demands on us. All true work has drudgery in it. It becomes a weariness, a lifeless routine with no spring in it, unless it is redeemed by the spirit in which it is done. When common labor is seen to be religious work, then daily drudgery can be glorified. Even the

habit of work, which has so blessed men, is but a makeshift without the ideal of work. To a spiritual being like man there is no detail of his life which has not spiritual significance; and the failure of our days is due to our neglect of the unseen in dealing with the seen, our forgetfulness to live every common hour in the power of an endless life.

Viewed practically, and put into simple language, the ideal of work is *faithfulness*, work done according to a high standard which the worker himself sets up. We have such easy and elastic consciences, and such low selfish standards! What will pass, what will do the turn, is often all that we aim at. We do not put conscience into our work. Speaking to a riveter once about piecework, I asked if the character of the work did not suffer from the haste to get as much money in as short a time as possible. He said that there was an inspector. "Does that

mean," I asked, "that the standard is to put in as many rivets as possible just in such a way that you will not need to come back and tighten them?" "That 's about it," he said honestly.

Our modern methods at least carry the danger of taking away from moral stamina. Such work may be well enough done, because it does not pay to come back and do it over again at the bidding of the inspector, but that is to put the inspector in the place of conscience. No work ever lasted without conscience. How is it that Cremonese violins have had such a repute in the world? We must accept Browning's explanation —

> Antonio Stradivari has an eye
> That winces at false work and loves the true.

The man comes out in his work; the character is revealed by conduct. We would be all the better if we had a little more fastidious taste about our own work. We should find it harder to please our-

selves than to please others. The self-respect which comes from a high standard will sometimes keep a man true, when he could satisfy the demands of others with less. A great preacher once said that his experience, after a considerable ministry, was that the people appreciated most what cost him least. That would represent a strong temptation to him. It is true in everything that mere flashy surface work often for a time puts the genuine solid work out of the market. Hence the mere market standard is not sufficient. A man must never suffer himself to be unfaithful to his better self. We have no safeguard if we have not conscience in our work.

We may not be master of our daily work, but we are at least master of the spirit in which we do it. We can try to be faithful, even when we cannot be great, or when the work seems commonplace. The Louvre in Paris has one of Murillo's pictures, which depicts the in-

terior of a convent kitchen, with angels doing the ordinary kitchen work, washing dishes, putting a kettle on the fire. The business of cooking is done with such grace that the menial tasks do not suggest any degradation, but seem the fit and proper work of angels, when they do it so beautifully. Kitchen work is refined by the dignity and sweet simplicity of such workers. "It is not thy works, which are all mortal, infinitely little, and the greatest no greater than the least, but only the spirit thou workest in, that can have worth or continuance."

There are two opposite temptations which beset us all. On the one side there is the *danger of the ideal*, the temptation to look only for large issues, imposing duties, heroic enterprises, neglecting the opportunities at our hand. We can be unfaithful in the name of God, because of what seems a large ideal. We can seek what we conceive to be the better part and refuse the common duties

and tasks. But to mean anything, the ideal must be taken down into our lives, and fashion itself in every act. The danger of the ideal is to miss the detail.

On the other hand, there is the *danger of detail*, making life a thing of patchwork merely. However laboriously stitched together, it is only patchwork at the end. There are men to whom nothing is great, who have low-souled contentment with the small. We can attend punctiliously to duty and be faithful in detail; but never once have our hearts fired by the inspiration of a large love. "Thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful." The danger of detail is to miss the ideal.

The proper attitude is the small for the sake of the large, faithfulness in the little because of faith in the great. Life is of a piece, and before we can come to anything like a true estimate, it must be viewed as a whole. We cannot speak of

a man's character till it has gathered some sort of consistency. Every section of life must concur in our judgment before we can speak of a character as formed. This is why so many of our common divisions in the life of man are futile if not false, such as into the morally great and the morally small. All life has spiritual significance. We are tempted to think that we are not being truly and fairly tested by the particular experiences through which we have passed and are passing, that this is only a day of small things unworthy of our real capacity. When we are forced to some measure of self-judgment and are sick at heart with a sense of the pettiness of our lives, we lay the blame on our surroundings that we have never had a proper chance; and we look forward to a future when some large opportunity will be given us, feeling sure that we will rise to the occasion when the occasion comes. But who are the men who are made by an

occasion? If we knew all the facts we would see that they are the men who have been using what occasions were granted them before. The faults and selfishness which come out in us now would only be more apparent in the larger sphere, unless the larger sphere brought with it a larger ideal. Our character conditions our future, and our character is the fruit of all the past. Judgment of our life is going on ceaselessly, and records itself infallibly and indelibly on character. It is a vain dream to think that any outside change would in itself make any difference, and that we can afford to neglect our small opportunities with the comfortable thought that nothing essential is altered, and that we are open to make a great success of some great opportunities that some day will come. A simple and plain fact of moral life is stated in the words, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much."

THE IDEAL OF WORK

A besetting temptation is to despise our present opportunities in the vaulting ambition for larger ones and in the aggrieved belief that we are worthy of better things than are possible to us now. No temptation is more common than this and finds more victims. We scorn the plain duties which are before us, dreaming of wider and more honorable tasks, sure of our capacity if it were but recognized and put to large tests. The proverb speaks of the fool who has his eyes on the ends of the earth and who misses the facts and chances that stare him in the face. The small suffers for the sake of the great. Space would fail to show how this temptation works havoc in every branch of life, domestic and social, personal and public, the home life, business life, political life, religious life. We ourselves have a proverb, for example, about those who are angels abroad and devils at home.

It has sometimes been made a charge

against some women who take up public work and are foremost in public causes that they neglect their home duties. Whether this be true or not, the temptation at least is in line with this one to which we are referring and lies pretty close to human nature. Perhaps, however, the temptation finds easier victims among those who do not attempt larger public work but who merely dream of it and meanwhile neglect plain and simple duty. It is always the temptation of the man of the one talent to hide it in the earth. The special temptation of the man of many talents is to misuse them, to spend them on himself, or to be proud of his capacity, and grow arrogant and selfish. The special temptation of the one-talent man is to despise his gift and to bury it, either through false modesty, or more often through wounded self-esteem. The cause of his failure may be humility or conceit, so close do opposites lie in the strange heart of man, so easily may ex-

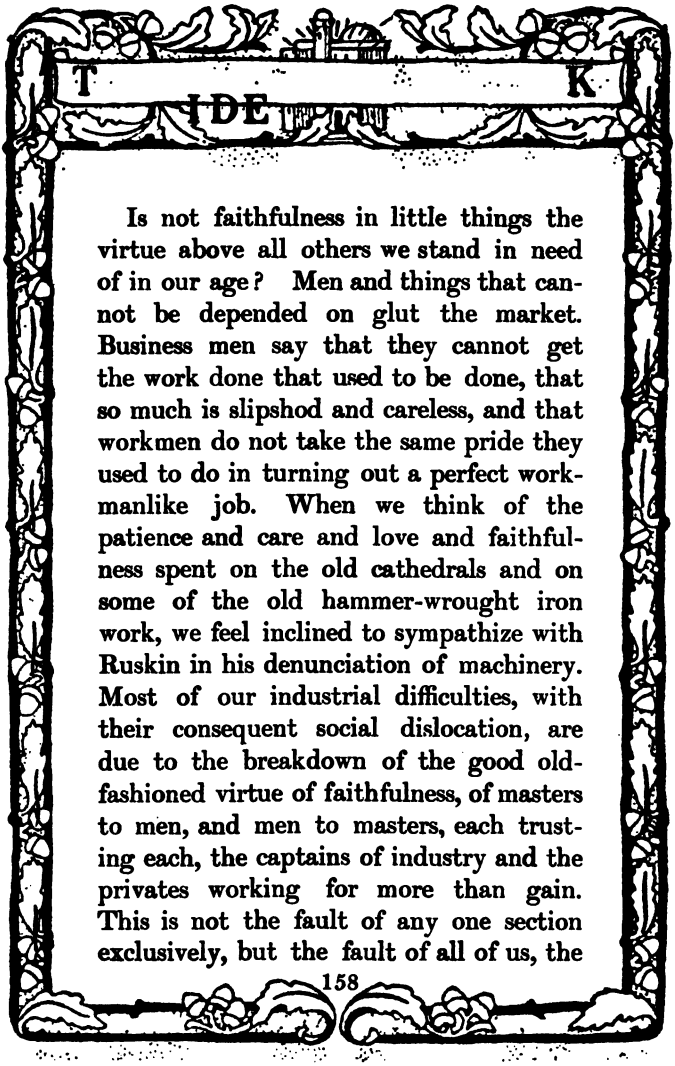
tremes meet. Just because we have not been intrusted with large concerns we will not make the most of what is afforded us, either in a kind of petulance, or in a sort of despair that nothing we can do can amount to much, an equally fatal though more worthy feeling. On the whole, perhaps the petulant mood is the commoner, as it is more usual for us to over-estimate our claims than to under-estimate them. We are discontented with our present opportunities on the score that we ought to be doing some nobler work and merit a wider sphere; and so we let the judgment of life go against us by default.

The inherent mistake of all such is the failure to perceive that moral life is a whole, an unbroken line, and not one that can safely be left with gaps in the communications. When the line is broken it means weakness everywhere. This is what St. James means when he says that to break one commandment is

to be guilty of all. We cannot distinguish between the spirit with which we look forward to large service and the spirit with which we actually perform the small services before us. We cannot be faithful in some ideal way if there be no faithfulness in our actual lives. A test in the small sphere is as good as a test in the large; for the strength of the chain is the strength of its weakest link.

Faithfulness is a moral quality, a thing of the character, and not just a graceful adornment which can be put on and off without making much difference. It is of the very stuff of character and comes out as clearly in the little things as in the great. If it exists at all it makes its presence felt in everything; if it does not exist it will be seen in nothing, neither the great nor the small. If there be no faithfulness displayed in the doing of small duties, the mere fact of having more important ones presented will in

itself make no difference. A new and great opportunity may indeed be the occasion for calling forth a new capacity and may give the whole life a new bent and the whole character a new strength. But this has been in spite of, and not because of, the previous failure; and if it is to survive it must be so assimilated into the character that it will henceforth affect the small as well as the great. Trustworthiness is built up by being faithful in that which is least. We all know characters which have many fine qualities, charm and sweetness and wisdom and grace, but which are spoiled by the lack of this virtue. Men who cannot be trusted are broken reeds, however gracefully they may sway in the breeze, and it is a common enough experience to find out how useless such reeds are for any human purpose. In all regions of life, in handicrafts, in business, in professions, what examples there are of this inherent weakness!



Is not faithfulness in little things the virtue above all others we stand in need of in our age? Men and things that cannot be depended on glut the market. Business men say that they cannot get the work done that used to be done, that so much is slipshod and careless, and that workmen do not take the same pride they used to do in turning out a perfect workmanlike job. When we think of the patience and care and love and faithfulness spent on the old cathedrals and on some of the old hammer-wrought iron work, we feel inclined to sympathize with Ruskin in his denunciation of machinery. Most of our industrial difficulties, with their consequent social dislocation, are due to the breakdown of the good old-fashioned virtue of faithfulness, of masters to men, and men to masters, each trusting each, the captains of industry and the privates working for more than gain. This is not the fault of any one section exclusively, but the fault of all of us, the

demand for faithfulness and the supply of it not being looked for by the community as the chiefest need. Work has suffered because character has suffered.

How all-important faithfulness is in all human relations, and not merely in trade relations, we must surely see. Fidelity, for example, is the first quality of soul we look for in a friend. If a man is not faithful, what matter what graces and charms of manner be his? Fickleness is the opposite vice of mind, and is fatal to any true relationship in life. Here also, as elsewhere, it is in the little things the test is keenest. Some friendships could stand one supreme strain that could not be relied on for human nature's daily food. Everything relating to this great virtue runs back in the long run to character. Faithfulness in the least things pertaining to their art or their work, attention to detail, has always been a mark of the highest character. All great men have had it.

THE IDEAL OF WORK

For one thing, it is the way to success, not in the vulgar sense of the word success, but in the true sense of gaining complete mastery of the particular work. Recklessness means ruin in business, and recklessness is want of faithfulness in the small things through which alone a man is enabled to form correct estimates and come to correct conclusions. Attention to every item, patient care in every detail, if they are combined with a large grasp of things as a whole, bring triumphant success in every kind of work. If this be so, much more need is there for faithfulness to achieve spiritual success. In view of the end nothing is unimportant. To the great general everything has significance, every manœuvre, every detail of discipline, the veriest minutiæ of the commissariat department, everything relating to his soldiers down to the shoe-leather, every rising ground and hollow in a proposed field of battle. He never knows where the weak spot may be, and the link be

amissing in the chain of cause and effect. Detail will overcome dash in the end. There is some truth in the old nursery rhyme that for the loss of the nail in the horse's shoe the battle was lost. Similarly, if life means to us the fight of faith, then everything must have importance in view of that. There will be no small things, nothing of common duty that we can afford to neglect, no part of life that we can extract from the grasp of faith.

Now, most of our unfaithfulness both in life and in faith is due to our mistaken standard as to the great and the small. We so easily judge things by the eye only. They are important to us according to size, appearance, amount. But great and small are only relative terms, and depend altogether on the standard. A huge money transaction on the stock exchange may be a very large thing from the point of view of the brokers, and a

pitiful triviality from any other point of view whatever. The widow's mite was a great money transaction in the eyes of Christ. Things are great or small according to the standard. If the eye is put close enough to a molehill, it will look like a mountain. We are so easily taken in by appearance and are always ready to judge men by the splash they make, and to rank affairs according to the noise they raise in the world. The common is looked on as the commonplace. Our eye catches the *italics* on the printed page, and the ideal book to us appears to be the one printed altogether in italics. We look for strenuous living, with great interests perpetually occurring, speaking at the pitch of our voice, living at the pitch of our powers. Our opportunities seem poor and petty, compared with this dream. We long for great events, imposing duties, extraordinary occasions. We could make something of our life, we think, if only we had not

such small sordid cares and tasks. What an astonishing illusion all this is! To speak at the pitch of the voice continually would take away all emphasis from speech whatever. All low is as good as all loud — and better. If we print all our tale in italics, they just become as ordinary type and cease to have the effect of exception. In the constant and insane effort after distinction we lose all chance of distinction. We must surely see the fallacy of refusing to be faithful in small things because we feel that faithfulness in large things is alone worthy of us.

We ask for heroic duties; but the duties that lie to our hand are heroic. The so-called heroic occasions are after all often easier, and therefore less heroic, than the commonplace trials that daily test the stuff of which we are made. Many a man, who could be a martyr in the stubborn zeal of fanaticism, is not strong enough to be faithful in the small things that cry for faithful treatment.

THE IDEAL OF WORK

Religion is for daily life, not for momentous events merely. Life, after all, is largely a matter of detail. It is filled up to all of us with its routine of small duties and usual tasks and trivial acts. An hour is made up of moments; a day is made up of hours; life is made up of days. The number of our days is the extent of our life; and the character of our days is the character of our life. With such a conception of human life as this, and of character in its influence on human destiny, we can see that it is not for us to pick and choose among the details of living, and not for us to think that we can label all the things we are called on to do as either great or small. We never know what are the great things and what are the small. We never know what demands faithfulness from its intrinsic worth and what is only a repetition of a formal act. We never know what is big with issue to ourselves or to the world. This stretch of the road

may seem mean and prosaic and not worth traversing; but we never know at what turn of the road there will break on us the gleaming towers of the City of God.

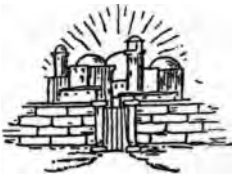
All service ranks the same with God.
. . . . . .
Say not "a small event"! Why "small"?
Costs it more pain that this ye call
A "great event" should come to pass
Than that?

With God there is neither great nor small. Every speck He has made is a little world. The leaf of a tree, the petal of a flower, the wing of a fly are as perfect as the solar system. Faithfulness is a divine quality, and the nearer we get to God the more will we take on His attribute of faithfulness. As a religious quality faithfulness is just the result of faith. It is the quality which faith has of affecting and permeating the whole man. Faith is not a mere intellectual assent to doctrines: it is constancy of soul, persist-

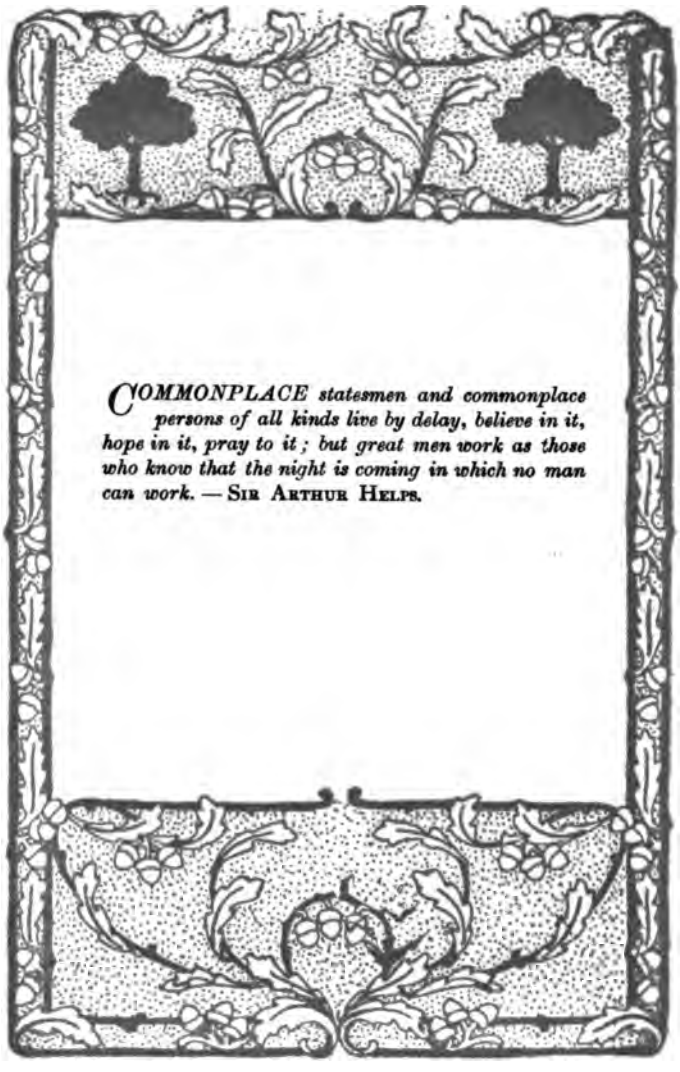
ence in adhering to truth. The test of the faith of our heart is the faithfulness of our life.

If life is a discipline, if it is designed as a probation, as the wisest and the best of earth's sons have ever felt it to be, then it is folly to neglect our present actual lot by dreaming of a time when we may be called to what seems wider service. To fail in the small, to prove ourselves unfaithful there, is as serious as to fail in the great; nay, it is more disastrous, for the man who has failed in the great may come down humbly to try again in the small and qualify once more for promotion, while to fail in the small is like depriving ourselves of the last chance. With a view to promotion in service, which is a right and altogether noble ambition, we must not weaken our claims or our capacity by being careless of present opportunity or contemptuous of it. The small is the stepping-stone to the great. It is the natural order and a

principle which we all admit in business. Unflinching fidelity in a low estate is the discipline for larger duties in a larger life. In the day of small things, constancy and faithfulness will carry us to noble ends.



THE GOSPEL OF WORK



COMMONPLACE statesmen and commonplace persons of all kinds live by delay, believe in it, hope in it, pray to it; but great men work as those who know that the night is coming in which no man can work. — SIR ARTHUR HELPS.

THE GOSPEL OF WORK

"THE latest gospel in this world is, Know thy work and do it," says Carlyle. It is also a pretty early gospel, which has driven man by necessity, assuring him that in the sweat of his brow he must eat his bread. The Christian faith has ever made much of the duty and even of the dignity of work, finding its highest plea for this dignity in the thought that God is the supreme Worker, and offering to man the thrilling motive to become a fellow-worker with God. The earthly activities are not despised, as in a religion like Buddhism, but are set forth as divinely appointed instruments of spiritual discipline and occasions for growth in grace, and are set forth also as the approved opportunities for service, the good fruits of the good tree of faith.

THE GOSPEL OF WORK

Christianity lifts the whole subject into the plane of religion by taking account of the spirit in which all work is done rather than the particular tasks themselves, making the obligation of work universal and offering to each man in his own place and lot an ideal for himself. Even in the monastic system, which was specially designed for holiness, and which was at best a one-sided and mistaken attempt, this practical side was not neglected; and *labor* took its place beside *prayer* as an equally necessary implement for religious culture. The Christian standard of conduct is indeed set so high that the most plausible objection to it is that it is impracticable. In Christian ethics duty received a new meaning and point, and was enforced by the highest sanctions. Since life is a probation, the appeal for faithfulness even in the trivial routine comes home to the individual conscience. Thus the gospel of work is implied in the Gospel itself, and never has it found such

a commanding motive as the Christian faith has given it. It has never been dignified with the name of a gospel in itself. It has rather been accepted as one of the facts of human life, and has been drawn into the service of the highest interests of men.

But the very phrase so common to-day, the "Gospel of Work," suggests that in some quarters the subject is not looked on from this Christian standpoint, but is made a substitute for religion itself. It is spoken of with something like religious enthusiasm. Christianity asserts that faith without works is dead, but here we seem to have works attempting to show life without faith at all. There is a modern preaching of a gospel of work which slights faith and arrogates to itself something like the supreme place of religion. "Properly speaking," says Carlyle, "all true work is religion; and whatsoever religion is not work may go

and dwell among the Brahmins, Antinomians, Spinning Dervishes, or where it will; with me it shall have no harbor. Admirable is that of the old monks, *Laborare est orare*, work is worship." In many writers work is treated as if it were enough for man, or at least it is assumed that it is all there is for man. He is called on to "fill and moralize the day," in the French phrase of which Matthew Arnold was so fond. The day is to be so filled and moralized by work, because the night cometh when no man can work. The pathos of life, with its uncertainty and brevity, gives a sort of passion to the preaching of the gospel of work.

We can see how this strenuous creed should appeal to an earnest man who realizes how short the time is. Indeed it is interesting to notice how often our Lord's phrase that the night cometh is made the basis for the new Stoicism. After all, the great fact of life to all men is that the night cometh when no man

can work. However we look at it, whatever be our faith about the future, we are brought up to this termination. There may be, as Browning sang, "other heights in other lives, God willing"; but here there is a limit to any earthly height, and a swift descent into the dark. To the wise man and to the fool, as the preacher said in his irony, the selfsame end comes. However the day is spent, the night at last arrives. The active body, the thinking brain, the feeling heart, the aspiring soul cease from action and thought and feeling and aspiring on this plane where these powers have hitherto acted. Whether or not the kind of life we live conditions death and after-death, it cannot be denied that death conditions and limits life. All philosophy must take account of it. To leave it out in any system of thought that pretends to represent human life is like Hamlet with the part of the Prince of Denmark left out. Our practical ethics must be affected by our

view of this dread subject. The whole contents of life, what it is in essence, what it is for, what it will become, are determined by this. We cannot always keep life and death in two distinct categories and arrange a handy little moral code for the one without reference to the other. We must ultimately co-ordinate our thinking over the whole sphere of human existence, and take into account all the facts; and the greatest fact of life is death. The fact that the night cometh gives color and urgency to the day. It fills it with meaning or turns it into a farce; touches it with pathos or with tragedy. A day with a night coming, scraping its heels as it follows, can never be as a day with no night. And what we mean by the term "night" will unfailingly influence our conception of what the day is. If the night be a sleeping to wake, or if it be a complete and absolute end of light, our view of the hours that fill up the day must be

different. Or assume that another day will dawn and the shadows of night flee away, much in our conception of the value of life will depend on whether the succeeding day has intimate relation with the previous one or means the beginning of a new existence. Creed and conduct in this all-important matter must react on each other. The Christian faith, which lights up the future with a great hope, by that also gives an immense motive power to ordinary life; and any form of materialism or even of agnosticism which denies immortality must inevitably alter the practical ethics of men. To put a meaning of despair into the words "the night cometh when no man can work" must consciously or unconsciously affect daily life and the standards and sanctions by which men live. To take away the authority of religion and the faith in the spiritual world around and above and beyond us is bound to create vast changes in the outlook of

life and the practice of life. It is absurd to expect that faith can be eclipsed in our midst and yet leave us where we were.

Now it does not follow that the first and only effect of such eclipse of faith must be an immediate and universal relaxation of morality. It is indeed according to historical analogy in similar times, and according to experience of our own time, to predict that it need not be so. To many, if not to the mass, it is true, the natural result of the denial of God and immortality can only mean the lowering of life all along the line. If we are as the beasts that perish and like them to-morrow we die, then we cannot wonder if the simple popular philosophy is accepted, "Let us eat and drink; let us snatch the day ere it flies, for the night cometh soon." We are expecting more of human nature than human nature has hitherto meant

if we do not lay our account for such easy reasoning. Thoughtless enjoyment of the present becomes a feasible and even a rational plan of life. Duty cannot maintain her place of authority as the stern daughter of the voice of God. Can we ask men to deny themselves, to live for the future, to follow the gleam, to nurse high thought and noble effort, if we tell them that the ideal is only a malady of which men sicken and wear out? What is the use of struggling and striving if there be no end to reach and no standard of morality beyond tradition or custom or convenience? Why make a god of duty when every other god is dethroned? Why work to the highest and fullest of a short strenuous day, when there is nothing to add except that the night cometh when no man can work? Such argument cannot be answered except by an appeal to some sense of obligation, which is after all only a relic of religious sentiment or

education. We can say nothing further to the man who draws out the bitter conclusion of the eclipse of faith, "All is vanity, and what profit hath a man of all his labor under the sun?"

At the same time it must be admitted that this is not the only alternative to one who accepts the full agnostic position. Even here there is a better part followed by the man who is in earnest and serious. Such an one says that since the night cometh when no man can work, he will therefore work while it is day and give himself to the best he can command. Matthew Arnold, who knew well the temptation to which men succumb when faith is loosened, strikes this high note. In his fine poem, *The Better Part*, after stating the common argument of the man who has ceased to believe in Christ and in eternal life, he goes on —

So answerest thou; but why not rather say:
Hath man no second life? *Pitch this one high!*
Sits there no Judge in Heaven, our sin to see?

THE GOSPEL OF WORK

More strictly then the inward judge obey!
Was Christ a man like us? — *Ah, let us try*
If we then too can be such men as he!

Of course it is a consequence of the position to try to show that loss of faith does not necessarily mean the impoverishment of moral life; hence the attempt to string men's conscience up to this high pitch. But we must admit that the immediate result of unbelief may be to do so to the earnest-hearted. The modern Gospel of work, which has such a place in ethical writers, is to some extent a direct consequence of the weakening of faith. Because the night cometh when no man can work, with its tragedy of a broken life, let us shut our teeth and straighten our back and go through with it; let us work while it is day: there is nothing better than this, nothing more worthy of man than stern unflinching devotion to duty. Carlyle would not have been so insistent on his gospel of work if he had had a richer gospel to

declare. It is a new version of the old theological antinomy between faith and good works, this time for the sake of temporal instead of eternal salvation.

We can easily see how the tendency works out. In the waning of spiritual life the earnest soul turns to duty, seeks to slake the infinite thirst by labor. The noble-minded whose creed is a denial of the Divine can only look for peace by stern repression of human needs, and seek a gospel of work to dull the pain of what is really a gospel of despair. Huxley, both by precept and by example, sets forth this virile consequence of his unfaith. Just because the night cometh when no man can work he was abundant in labor, and in his *Evolution and Ethics* he calls upon his hearers to play the man and to attempt some work of noble note. We remember the fine finish of that lecture with its plain preaching of the new Stoicism, summoning men to the great moral task to cherish the good and to bear

the evil with stout hearts, striving ever to diminish it; calling us to be

strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find and not to yield.

Man who refuses any more to be lured on by hope is to be driven on by despair. There is a Christian gospel of work, as we have seen, in which the meanest details of duty are glorified by being done for love, and even drudgery is made divine, and all the discipline of daily work is used for the growth in grace and character which are yet to blossom out in fine flower under the smile of God. But here is a gospel of work, which takes no account of such motives, which bends to the tasks without being braced by the hope.

It is indeed a remarkable phenomenon, a new form of works without faith, of morality without religion. It is at best only a counsel of despair, making the best of a bad job, a poor enough substitute for what is lost, but we must do justice to the touch of nobility in it.

THE GOSPEL OF WORK

Romanes has a passage which illustrates admirably some of the points insisted on, in his *A Candid Examination of Theism*, in which he took up a position of agnosticism and almost of materialism, a position which he left in after years to come back to his old faith in the gospel of Christ. The passage is interesting too because it lays stress on feelings of the heart rare enough in philosophical writings of the kind, and because it does not hide the poverty of the new position. "And forasmuch as I am far from being able to agree with those who affirm that the twilight doctrine of the 'new faith' is a desirable substitute for the waning splendor of 'the old,' I am not ashamed to confess that with this virtual negation of God the universe to me has lost its soul of loveliness; and although from henceforth the precept 'to work while it is day' will doubtless gain an intensified force from the terribly intensified meaning of the words that 'the night cometh

when no man can work,' yet when at times I think, as think at times I must, of the appalling contrast between the hallowed glory of that creed which once was mine and the lonely mystery of existence as now I find it, at such times I shall ever feel it impossible to avoid the sharpest pang of which my nature is susceptible. For whether it be due to my intelligence not being sufficiently advanced to meet the requirements of the age, or whether it be due to the memory of those sacred associations which to me at least were the sweetest that life has given, I cannot but feel that for me, and for others who think as I do, there is a dreadful truth in those words of Hamilton, philosophy having become a meditation not merely of death but of annihilation, the precept *know thyself* has become transformed into the terrific oracle of Oedipus —

> **Mayest thou ne'er know the truth of what thou art."**

THE GOSPEL OF WORK

We have here again the gospel of work as a pitiful substitute for the fuller, richer gospel of the love of God. Out of all the wreckage of the stranded faith the only thing to him that can be called a moral gain is the sterner necessity to lay hold of present duty, the intensified force of the precept to work while it is day because of the lurid meaning of the night that cometh. Here also there is no attempt to deny that it is a poor asset to recover from such a tragic bankruptcy.

We must honor those who meet the eclipse of faith in such heroic mood, instead of weakly assenting to the softer creed, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die"; as in the decay of pagan faith we honor the Stoics who preached a similar doctrine of honor and duty as opposed to the Epicurean alternative; though from the premises the one is as logical as the other, and from some points of view is even more rational than the other. But will such a modern Stoicism last? Will

such a gospel of work wear? Will it not be, as it was in Rome, a sort of luxury of a few strong and noble souls who cling to something stable when the foundation of life is removed? After all, why should there be any *sacredness* in labor, which is one of Carlyle's phrases in praise of it? And why should he protest so vehemently against the gospel of happiness and against the gospel of liberty, which he thinks must ruin the best in life, when all he has to offer is a painful gospel of work? He thinks that the whole wretchedness and atheism of man's ways in these generations shadows itself for us in the pretension to be what we call happy. "Every pitifulest whipster that walks within a skin has his head filled with the notion that he is, shall be, or by all human and divine laws ought to be, happy." The strenuous answer he offers to this demand for happiness is "'Happy' my brother? First of all, what difference is it whether thou art happy or not? To-day becomes yesterday

so fast, all To-morrows become Yesterdays; and there is no question whatever of the happiness, but quite another question." "It is, after all, the one unhappiness of a man, that he cannot work; that he cannot get his destiny as a man fulfilled. Behold the day is passing swiftly over, our life is passing swiftly over; and the night cometh wherein no man can work. The night once come, our happiness, our unhappiness — it is all abolished, vanished, clean gone: a thing that has been." We need the noble scorn of such words, as they are a strong moral tonic. But even the pitifulest whipster has the right to ask why work should be his destiny as a man; and if it makes no difference whether he is happy or not, he may ask what difference it makes whether he works or not when the everlasting night, with her silences and veracities, is come? We may despise the man who chooses what appears to us the weaker and lower alternative, but it is difficult

to see what grounds we have to condemn him.

From the assertion of our modern prophets of the vanity of life without an adequate end of labor, we step to the further assertion of the vanity of labor itself without an adequate end. We naturally ask about any work, What is it for; what does it lead to? After all, however high our estimate of any achievement of man, the work which we can do is of very little moment in the history of the universe. A man may manufacture cloth or build houses of the best material, but neither garments nor houses can last for ever. Even the longest-lived work, which we call by the name of art, is in itself not immortal. The canvas fades; the marble crumbles; the language dies and changes: so we can only speak about painting or sculpture or literature as immortal works of art in a very limited sense. If labor is judged by actual pro-

duction, then all labor is vain. The test of work, as it is the test of life itself, is an inner one, the end that underlies it, the spirit in which it is done, the motive that inspires it. If work is needed to dignify life, something is also needed to dignify work. The mere habit of work will do much for a man; but in itself it is morally neutral, and needs to be filled by an ideal of some kind. Its real worth depends on the end for which it is designed. The true dignity of life is secured when it is joined to the infinite. Only the spiritual belongs to the eternal world; and so only the spiritual is destined to live. This is the only redemption of work from meanness and ultimate fatuity.

Certain it is that work divorced from faith loses its great inspiring motive to drive life into the high regions. The true gospel of work, and the only one that can apply to all, and be a force to every man that believes, is that which

our Lord stated for Himself, "I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day." It is the recognition that life has a divine purpose and meaning, and will have a divine judgment. The night cometh, the end of the day of opportunity and service comes; and so there is a note of urgency in it, not because that is all we have, but because if we have lost the great opportunity of the day of probation we have lost the opportunity of being and becoming and doing and serving, growing in grace, and performing the Father's Will. This faith in God, and in God's future for us, adds a glorious light to all service, however small and petty it looks; for it is not the work in itself that counts, but the spirit in which it is done, the manner of doing it, and the lessons learned in doing. The true ennobling of work is by flooding it with the light of eternity, and by coloring it with the glory of love. Work, like everything else in life, needs to be

redeemed from vanity. Godless work is blasted by the same essential condemnation as Godless life. The night cometh for it. It is only "in the Lord" that labor is not in vain, done of faith and done for love.

We cannot imagine a stronger motive than such a living faith. A man living in the power of an endless life would be expected to become serious and responsible, to gain increasing insight into what are the truly important things, to become quick to recognize duty, and unflinching in its fulfilment. His faith is a dynamic to drive life with exhaustless energy. It takes into time some of the force of eternity. The man who tastes the power of the world to come grows to the full stature of his personality, with ever-enlarging outlook and ever-expanding faculties. He should attain to virility and stability of character. From the standpoint of eternity the confused details of life should fall into proper perspective; the petti-

ness and shiftlessness of ordinary life should shrivel off. If such an absolute faith in immortality were being daily absorbed into the being of a man, it would be an impulsive force that would transform the whole of life, kindling every power till it glowed, and yet steadying the man with quiet intensity of purpose. It would shed a light on his path, that he might walk serenely in the way of God, unallured by seductions on the right hand and the left. It would give him the necessary motive to attain mastery of himself, and to spend himself in the devoted service of God. The lesser lights of earth, and the smaller loves of the world, would wither before the majesty of his ideal. He would choose the better part consistently and persistently; for the lower would lose its attraction. Grant this faith in the Gospel of the Resurrection as a hypothesis, and we would not wonder at such a result. It would be a moral dynamic, unsurpassed

as a motive for noble action and high thinking. If it were possible to live in the power of endless life, all life would be suffused with meaning and with dignity. Why should it not be possible? The world can be to a man not the poor tinselled stage for low comedy which we make it; but an arena of action where he plays his part before high heaven, attaining self-mastery, spending time and talent and strength in devoted service, with the blessed assurance that the labor is not in vain. He lives in the spiritual world already; so that when the pilgrimage is ended there is not much of the life to slough off. He enters the Kingdom laden with the spoils of life. "Therefore my beloved brethren be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

REST AND WORK

WHEN the last dawns are fallen on gray,
And all life's toils and ease complete,
They know who work, not they who play,
If rest is sweet. — SYMONDS.

Return to thy rest, O my soul. — PSALM CXVI. 7.

REST AND WORK

MUCH has been said in praise of work, but the heart of man longs for rest. It is one of the practical problems to all to adjust correctly the relative position of these two subjects in our life. They are closely connected, as we know from experience. There can be no true rest without work, and the full delight of a holiday cannot be known except by the man who has earned it; while both the work itself and the worker need rest. Some men have never worked enough to know the joy and the peace of rest from work; and, on the other hand, a few habitually commit the sin of overwork. Many endure the working days for the sake of the holidays, and work ever with an eye on the rest and recrea-

tion to follow; while some wise men rest for the sake of their work, looking upon it as the needful preparation to enable them to do their best.

We usually set the two words in antithesis, as if work and rest were absolute contradictories, the one implying the absence of the other. Alphonse Daudet, in his sketch of Gambetta, speaks of the shock he received on entering Paris during the war, just before the siege. The difference between the quiet of nature and the stir and din of the excited city was very marked. The swarms of people in military uniforms, the resounding cry, the mass which came to the surface because of the absence of the police, made the city seem a dream, or rather a nightmare. "I was returning from the country, a quiet nook in the forest of Senart, the fresh odor of the leaves and of the river yet in my nostrils. I felt myself stunned; it was Paris no longer, but a huge fair, an enormous barrack holding

revel." The contrast between rest and work to most of us is like the contrast between the quiet of the hills or the solitude of the sea, and the busy bustling city. When we compare the human longing for rest with the heavy-laden lot of so much labor, we understand why they should be thought opposed to each other.

Perhaps more to-day than ever many go to the very limits of labor. With some it is temperament which makes them too eager, and makes them tend to increase the pace of their toil. With more it is the pressure of modern life of which we hear so much, the exacting nature of business and the multiplying demands for energy. Men get worn out, and complain of being "run down," and need to call a halt to stop the drain on the life's resources. Rest is prescribed to recruit the strength and restore the decaying force. In proportion as we make much of work in our social conditions, we make much of holidays for the jaded workers,

when the diminished vitality can be reinvigorated. There is a ministry of physical rest to counterbalance the heavy load of labor, a ministry in which Nature brings her recuperative power and revives the waning energies. The more the strain of life, the more men need times of refreshment to repair the loss and make up by rest the constant wear and tear of work.

All who praise work and make it an unmitigated blessing, with no shade of curse in it, must take account of this deep human longing for rest and for relief from constant strain. We may hold up to admiration the strenuous life with its endless activities and its almost reckless labor; but if work were in itself a sufficient end for man, why should the heart never be satisfied with it, and the sweetest souls look upon heaven as a place of rest? We all know moods when we sympathize with Charles Lamb's protest against the ever-haunting importunity of

business, with plough or loom or anvil or spade, and worst of all, the "dry drudgery at the desk's dead wood."

> Who first invented work, and bound the free
> And holiday-rejoicing spirit down?
> . . . . . .
> Who but the being unblest, alien from good,
> Sabbathless Satan!

There is something to be said on the side of leisure as against the hurry and rush and fever of toil; if not a plea for idleness, at least a plea for more time and opportunity for quietness. There is sometimes a "wise and masterly inactivity," which Sir James Mackintosh, surely with some sarcasm, said was the usual system of the British House of Commons. Times of leisure are necessary, even in the interests of work itself.

The need for rest is implanted in our very nature. Experience and history and religion all combine in insisting on the value of ceasing from labor. We cannot

estimate what it has meant for the world to have a day in the week of which it is said, "In it thou shalt do no work." The Fourth Commandment is one of the world's safeguards, educating men in the true ministry of leisure and in the possibilities of leisure. It is the chief means by which the primal curse has been modified and the strain of toil has been relieved. The greed and selfishness of men have been kept in check by it. The low materialistic theories of life have been held at bay by the opportunities given, and the suggestions of spiritual things made possible, by the day sacred to rest and to God. The Sabbath has been a sanctuary for weary, heavy-laden men and women, a breathing space from ceaseless toil. It has also been a sanctuary for the souls of men, pointing to a higher life than the material, and to interests larger than the meat that perisheth. It is a continual commentary on the word of Christ that man shall not

live by bread alone. It has conserved the spiritual for the race, preaching its own eloquent sermon by its silence. It brings us back to the great facts, forgotten and obscured by the world's din, but emerging again to take their rightful place in the life of man. It sets the key-note of the music which should fill and inspire all the other days.

This insistence on a day of rest has been useful as a protest against imagining that life exists for the sake of work instead of the opposite, that work exists for the sake of life. We must not make too much of mere work, and above all must not let all our energies be absorbed by material activities. There is a whole side of life opened to us by Christ's call to meditate on a great lesson of nature, "Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin." A danger of the gospel of work of our day is to judge everything by utility, and to judge people also by their

practical ability and usefulness. There is a place for beauty, for flowers of the field, though they neither toil nor spin. There are some with the flower-nature, gracious and sweet, but with little evident practical value to the world, unfit even for the heavy labor in which others rejoice, humble and gentle, with a tender beauty of character, unconsciously displaying the lovely bloom of love itself. There is a place for the lilies of the field, as well as for the corn and the barley. The flowers that gladden and console life serve a function as high as the wheat that sustains it. So, there are many lives of the highest usefulness which never contribute to what we call the means of living. It is because we have such a narrow view of what living is that we restrict its means to material good. Poetry and art and music are not among the things we include in the necessaries of life and do nothing to expedite business, but do they make no contribution to society? Would

not the world be a sadder place and life a poorer thing without them? If we judge of things by bare utility, are we to leave no room for joy and beauty? There are some also of the flower-heart, of sweet unselfish sunny nature, who are of little active service, but whose ministry is of endless blessing, and who for the world's best life could less easily be dispensed with, than many of the square-jawed, masterful type of strenuous life, and who toil and spin with unremitting labor. Some of them may be among the weak and sick or in some way incapacitated from the hard work of life. The delicate, the unfit, the simple-minded, those whom the rough rude world calls the incompetent, who cannot join in the bustle and stir and take on them the burdens, or face gaily the storms of life, need not be discouraged by their uselessness, if they are living the flower-life in unrepining sweetness and with the gracious comfort of love. They need not grieve overmuch that they

do not toil or spin if they by their simple love give rest and good cheer and new heart to those who go out to the battle.

In like manner something is to be said for the contemplative life as against the practical. This is one of the chief lessons of the ministry of rest to us, and is one of the great opportunities of Sunday. In times of leisure we lay aside the practical cares and worries and recollect ourselves, gather ourselves again at the centre, that we may calmly find the right value of all our activities, and thus also give them the right direction. Leisure is needed for the richest and deepest lives; and occasions for silence and repose come to all, or at least can be made by all. "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." It was designed as a day of rest from secular toil; but holiness meant more than mere separation from everyday employment. It meant the use of the day so that man would be refreshed in his whole being.

REST AND WORK

Abstinence from worldly occupation and cessation of work do not represent the complete advantage of the day. There must be a laying hold of the opportunity for spiritual culture. We might drop work and take to play, turn the holy day into a holiday, bartering the chance of real rest for the chance of recreation, but that would be to lose the great opportunity.

George Gissing, who cannot be called a prejudiced observer, says in *The Private Papers of Henry Reycroft:* "There was a time when it delighted me to flesh my satire on the English Sunday; I could see nothing but antiquated foolishness and modern hypocrisy in this weekly pause from labor and from bustle. Now I prize it as an inestimable boon, and dread every encroachment upon its restful stillness. . . . When out of England I have always missed this Sunday quietude, this difference from ordinary days which seems to affect the very at-

mosphere. . . . Think as one may of its significance, our Day of Rest has a peculiar sanctity, felt, I imagine, in a more or less vague way even by those who wish to see the village lads at cricket and theatres open in the town. The idea is surely as good a one as ever came to heavy-laden mortals; let one whole day in every week be removed from the common life of the world, lifted above common pleasures as above common cares. Sunday has always brought large good to the generality, and to a chosen number has been the very life of the soul, however heretically some of them understood the words. If its ancient use perish from us, so much the worse for the country." Being a bit of a pessimist in this as in other things, he thinks it will perish, and with it will perish the habit of periodic calm which is the best boon ever bestowed upon a people. We may ask, if it is such an undoubted blessing, why should we let it perish? Why should

we allow the boon to be taken away from us? "With the decline of the old faith, Sunday cannot but lose its sanction, and no loss among the innumerable we are suffering will work so effectually for popular vulgarization. . . . Imagine a bank-holiday once a week!" To some of us it seems a very good argument in favor of the old faith. It is surely reason why we should strive to keep the day from losing its sanction.

But we can never save the situation by looking on Sunday as ministering to the necessity for rest merely. We must see that it ministers to a higher necessity still. If its chief function is physical rest, that may logically be extended to include all sorts of recreation. We need to lay stress on its spiritual opportunities. The Church of Christ and the Sunday stand or fall together; and the Church to-day, as ever, stands as an eternal protest against the shallow surface life which is ever in danger of withering away be-

cause it has no root. It is a constant reminder of the need for the contemplative life and the culture of the devotional. It calls to prayer, to praise, to worship, to shut the door on the world and forget the distracting ambitions, and desires, and works. It stands as the Sanctuary of the race, for the weary and the heavy-laden and all the beaten, broken lives of men; and it tells the strong and the victors in the fight that away from God their strength is spent for nought, and their victories are empty and barren of good. It asserts that even work without worship is idle, the frantic beating of the air. To learn truly to be active, we must go back to the Sanctuary of life and gain the inner sense of things. We need to gather the soul again at the centre of rest. If we would resist the encroachments on the Sabbath it is not enough to make it a day of cessation from toil. We must make it what it should be, a unique opportunity for the refreshment of the whole

man, for worship, for thought, for communion with God and His people. We must guard and use it jealously to get the true good from it, to make us better, and stronger, and fitter for our daily work. Worship rests the soul as sleep rests the body.

This leads us to notice the ideal in connection with this subject, which makes rest not a state dissevered from work, but the very atmosphere in which work is done. There is a rest which goes deeper than mere physical repose, the peace and quietness of mind and heart which alone make the best work possible. This is, as Matthew Arnold says, the lesson of nature :

> Of toil unsever'd from tranquillity !
> Of labor, that in lasting fruit outgrows
> Far noisier schemes, accomplish'd in repose,
> Too great for haste, too high for rivalry !

It is the lesson on the very face of nature that growth is accompanied with deep-

down, underlying repose. The vital processes quietly work themselves out through succeeding seasons, never resting, but never hasting. There is a masterful ease about all growth. Nature does her work without strain or hurry, with no jar of mechanism, but with the resistless strength of quietness. In human life also, in its own degree, this same quietness is ever the mark of strength. The master of any art does his work easily, with sure, swift touches, lying back of which is sleepless toil. He has no need for the display of vulgar melodrama, but can create his effects with delicate touch. In the art of life a man must study to be quiet that he may be able to work well. It means a spirit of rest pervading all the channels of thought, and feeling, and action.

If this is true of the art of life, much more true is it of the great task of Christian life. That means a spirit of faith radiating out through these same chan-

nels. "What is the use of the cloister in the midst of society," says Fra Marchese, "if it is not a focus and centre of morality and religion, diffusing and planting deeply in the hearts of the people ideas of honesty, justice, and virtue, in order to temper and hold in balance the brutal force of the passions which threaten continually to absorb all the thoughts and affections of men?" It is a noble ideal for a monastery, which has sometimes been achieved; and in the individual life faith is a cloister in the heart, a quiet vital force making a centre which diffuses strength and inspires every activity. The truth of Quietism and all kindred mysticism is self-evident to every religious mind. It is that through faith the soul can attain a repose which makes it independent of external things and can say in sweet humility with the Psalmist, "Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child." There

is a detachment of soul from the world, an inward aloofness which puts things in their rightful place and makes a man sit loosely to all earthly good.

Some socialists make enmity to Christianity part of their system because they see how Christian faith gives quiet content, and they look for discontent to give them a lever for the upheaval of social conditions. Of course, their contention is false and neglects the other side of the facts, namely, that Christian faith being rooted and grounded in love, has been, and is, the greatest force in the world against wrong and injustice. But in so far it is true and is the glory of the faith, that it teaches men both to be abased and to abound. The escape from all the fret and fever and hurry and unrest of the world is to be achieved not by running away from the difficulties, but by deepening the life. "Seek not much rest but patience," said Thomas à Kempis, and patience means not quiescent waiting

and passive endurance, but the humble acceptance of duty.

True and complete rest is not got by quietude; it is rather a spirit which should pervade the labor. It is something at the centre of life issuing in strength for all the needful activities. It is rest in the midst of the labor, quiet for the sake of the work. The two must go hand in hand, the meditative life and the practical, or both will suffer from the separation. The only peace a true man asks is peace to do his work well, not to be allowed to lay down his arms, but to be inspired to fight the good fight. He is not very much concerned about what is after the work is done, if only he is permitted to get it done, as with the lover in the ballad:

> Make me your wreck as I come back,
> But spare me as I gang.

We are reminded here of the essential difference between happiness and peace. Happiness comes from the outside, pleas-

ant experiences, satisfaction with our environment. Happiness comes to us; peace must be in us. Most of our happiness, or what we call happiness, is a series of distractions, surface gaiety, outside amusement, dependent on circumstances. It languishes with a frown and revives with a smile. The thirst for happiness grows by what it feeds on, and becomes insatiable in its demands to satiate itself. We are loath to give up our feverish attempts to reach peace by outside means, and think that all our dissatisfaction and unrest are due to our uncongenial environment. In cities we think that if we lived amid the silent testimony of the hills we would be different, as in the country men think the same if they lived the larger life of the city.

We think this spirit of rest impossible in our present surroundings with our distractions and work. It is something which might be had from the cloister but

cannot survive in the bustle of life. There is a sweet little monastery in Florence, fragrant with sacred memories, rich with blessed history. To the religious soul its very dust is dear; for there the saintly bishop Antonino lived his Christ-like life, and there the prophetic prior Savonarola wore out his noble heart, and there the pious painter Fra Angelico painted, and the only less famous Fra Bartolommeo. It stands the forlorn relic of a dream, but even yet it breathes of the true monastic peace, with secluded cloisters where the noise of the city is hushed, with little cells whose bare white-washed walls are glorious with the pure delicate frescoes of the Angelic painter — a reflection of his own pure soul. In the centre of the quadrangle is a little garden kissed by the sunshine, and up from it is seen the deep blue of the Italian sky speaking of eternal peace. It is natural to think that one might cultivate the soul there, might there forget the world,

its hot ambitions and its fierce passions. It even seems the ideal for a servant of the Church to live quiet prayerful hours in some such retreat and then to go to the restless city with the message of the gospel of peace. It is a dream; and the Church had to go through much scourging before she gave up her dream.

Peace is independent of place, as it is independent of fortune. It can be possessed in a narrow corner of life, or amid distractions and labors, or through fiery trials and temptations, or even with sorrow and tears. It cannot be gotten for gold, nor lost through poverty. The world cannot give it, nor take it away. This is the message of the faith. Peace is to be sought in the soul, and is to be found by losing of self, in love of God and service of man. It comes over our tumultuous lives, and settles on the soul as rain on thirsty land. With the roar of life in ears and brain and heart we can still be calm. In the busy market-

place and the crowded street, in the multitude of our cares and thoughts and activities, amid the strife of tongues and the weary ways of men, we can be at peace because our hearts are fixed. Over the broken waters of our restless life there hovers the golden glory of God's eternal peace.

THE CONSECRATION OF WORK

YE are not your own; for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. — 1 COR. vi. 20.

THE CONSECRATION OF WORK

THE redemption of work can only be permanently secured when it passes into the consecration of work. Religion demands that the whole life should be imbued by the religious spirit. "It is as when a man sojourning in another country, having left his house and given authority to his servants, and to each one his work, commanded also the porter to watch." This short parable suggests the Christian view of life as a trust given to man, by which he is put upon his honor in his Master's absence. Each has authority given him; each has special business to transact; none is without his appropriate task. It is left to the conscience of each to perform his duty till his Master returns. Be it soon or late, the servants are expected day by day to dis-

charge faithfully the affairs intrusted to them. Authority is given to them, to every man his work. There are great moments in religion, moments of decision and of emotion, times when the soul is lifted in some great spasm of feeling, but these moments are only valuable when their inspiration is carried down into the details of everyday action. We cannot live by spasms; and our faith must be judged in the long-run by how it issues in life, how we use the authority intrusted us, and how we acquit ourselves in the complete task of living. The religion which leaves out of account the large tract we call secular is imperfect and false, however high the emotion at times, and however magnificent the spasms.

There *is* distinctively religious work, the work of the Church, the work of personal testimony to the truth, extending the bounds of the Kingdom. We ought to have more of this, a franker

and nobler witness of all the members of the Church, and a wider acceptance of duty towards them that are without; for the work of the Church is committed to us, put into our hands as representatives of our Master. There is a place for each of us, a demand for the service of all. From the point of view of distinctively religious work it is as when a man sojourning in another country, having left his house and given authority to his servants, and to each one his work, commanded the porter also to watch. Could anything more fitly describe the urgency of religious duty both for ourselves and for others, and more strongly impress us with a sense of responsibility for our share in the great task of the world's redemption? We are expressly delegated for this purpose, with authority given us and a place of service, and to every man his work.

But we greatly err if we confine the interpretation of this parable to what we

call distinctively religious work, if we divide our life into a little snippet that we call sacred with imperative sanctions, leaving the major part of it as outside the scope of religion. The common division of life into things sacred and things secular is false. We cannot draw a hard-and-fast line between religious duty and worldly business, between the work of the Lord and common work. We are tempted to think that we are judged by our creed and profession and worship, and that all the rest does not count. But what we call secular affairs make up so much of our common life, that the manner in which we deal with these really represents the persons we are more correctly than how we comport ourselves in the odd moments of sacred devotion. If our religion is not elevating and inspiring our daily life, our daily life will drag down our religion to its own level. We surely see the inconsistency of strictness in devotion, and laxity in the disposal of everything else,

time, and talent, and money, and daily work. If we offer anything to God we must offer everything. Prayer that is unrelated to the rest of life is just barren wishing, of no higher rank than the superstitious use of pagan charms. All our actions must be governed by religion as truly as the little section we cut off and label sacred. Religion to be real and vital must penetrate to every detail, our whole manner of thinking, and acting, and living, our behavior to our fellows, our way of transacting business.

Christianity has as one of its ideals the complete consecration of the secular life, making daily duty subserve the best interests of character and elevating the ordinary vocation into a sphere of service. We will never be right till we bring everything into the sweep of religion, money matters, business matters, and all the complex relations of our actual life. It may be difficult — it is diffi-

cult — but it is the Christian task. The Christian tone and temper must appear in the common duties of ordinary life, in the way we carry ourselves in our several states and employment in the world. Faith cannot reach its perfect end till it works itself out in practice. What has our faith done for us if it has no influence on our secular affairs, no effect on our mind and temper? There is something surely amiss if Christian devotion has no outcome in a sense of Christian service.

Consecration is needed to save our lives from ultimate failure. To "consecrate" meant in the Old Testament to set apart, dedicate, separate from common to sacred use; and in the New Testament the word kept this meaning and only took on a deeper color with a more inward and more spiritual conception of what sanctity meant. Its essence is the simple dedication of self to God, so that the whole life is filled with the sense of

possession, as belonging to Him. This Christian consecration is expressed fully in the great words, "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's."

The state of our life registers itself automatically on our work. Our good activities cannot keep themselves alive. That is why we ever need revivals of religion, renewals of living faith. The organization we call the Church will keep itself going for a little by its old momentum in a dull and blundering fashion; but that cannot last for long, and even when it lasts it does not amount to much —a name to live when it is dead. A man may sometimes seem to be able to make up in zeal what he lacks in faith; but it soon becomes sound and fury signifying nothing. When passion at the heart grows dull, when spiritual life ceases to be true and fervent, the tide of work wanes out on its long ebb. This

is the explanation of many a failure, the neglect of the central fire which alone can supply heat for motive energy. We may fill our hands full of larger work and be constantly extending our interests and be giving our aid to all good causes; but if our own soul is all the time growing arid and lifeless, our service will lose its point and all our activities become hollow. Everything in religion comes back inevitably to this personal appeal to have the heart and will and conscience renewed at the feet of God, to submit the soul in a new abandonment to its Master, to rekindle the love at the altar and increase the faith by communion in order that our service may be acceptable and truly successful.

The Christian faith brings the reinforcement of a new and holy motive to the universal law of work. We are to do our business not because we must by physical compulsion, but because it is God-given, assigned to us as a sphere wherein

we can glorify Him and serve Him. Nothing else will ennoble the petty drudgery and glorify the narrow corner. We are set there for a great end — an opportunity afforded us to display zeal and faithfulness and probity.

Russell Lowell in his poem, "A Glance behind the Curtain," makes Cromwell stand in doubt before the temptation to leave England to her fate while he seeks peace in a land beyond the sea, and then makes him decide by the thought of imperious duty demanding him to play the man where he is. The thought of work assigned to him sways the balance.

> No man is born into the world whose work
> Is not born with him. There is always work
> And tools withal, for those who will,
> And blessed are the horny hands of toil!

There is something of the same assurance in the life of every noble man who has bent his neck to the yoke which he was convinced was given by God. It adds a

new and sacred sanction to the old necessity, if we accept our daily work as divinely appointed discipline. From the beginning God assigned work to man, "He put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it"; and He puts us into our lot to serve the highest ends both for ourselves and for the world. Christians are meant to enter into all the world's activities, and inspire them with the spirit of the faith.

What will so penetrate every nook and cranny of our being that such complete consecration is possible? A sense of duty is not enough. It is not enough to realize that duty demands unflinching adherence to the ordinary tasks to which we are already tied. It is not enough even to accept our lot as the will of God. That may produce resignation and fidelity, but it will not transform work and lift it into a region where spiritual power reinforces the ordinary necessity for labor.

THE CONSECRATION OF WORK

A man will go on the more doggedly if he believes that he is living and working as "in the great Taskmaster's eye"; but it will not necessarily bring an enlargement of life and a fresh buoyancy to all his powers.

True consecration comes from a new inspiring personal relation. It has its source in God's love, and its driving-power is the simple desire to please Him and do His will. William Law in his *Serious Call* has a chapter on an inquiry into the reason why the generality of Christians fall so far short of the holiness and devotion of Christianity, and his answer is that men have not the *intention* to please God in all their actions. He gives instances to show how such a distinct and serious intention would affect different classes. He shows how the desire to please God will make a tradesman a saint in his shop. He will buy and sell, and labor and travel, not merely that he may do good to himself and others, but also that he may make

his worldly business acceptable to God and turn a life of trade into a life of holiness and devotion and piety.

The same desire will keep a gentleman of birth and fortune from living in idleness and indulgence, in sports and gaming, in pleasures and intemperance, in vain expenses and high living. It is a simple rule by which every one can examine and judge his life; and Law appeals to intention expressly because it is so simple, and every one who has a mind can see how he stands by looking into his own heart. "For it is as easy for every person to know whether he intends to please God in all his actions, as for any servant to know whether this be his intention towards his master." Now, that Christians should have such a desire and intention is not only reasonable, but should be inevitable. The transformation of life comes easily from the transformation of character; and that is what faith in Christ can do for a man, giving

him a new motive and setting him in a new environment. What fine examples we have had in all classes of merchants and professional men and tradesmen, consecrating their talents and their worldly work — living commentaries of the apostolic injunction, "not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord!"

The one word which best expresses this aspect of religion is the word *Service*, which implies the consecration of all gifts and of life itself. It means the sense of possession by God, that we belong to Him, and He has rights over us which we are proud and glad to own. We are to serve Him everywhere and in everything, dedicating our practical life as well as our spiritual life. A further strong and tender motive is added when we see that consecration is to be made in the power of love. "For their sakes I consecrate Myself," said our Lord, revealing in the word the secret of the cross and the secret of all His life. If that could be in any sense a

motive with Christ, how much more should it be with us! The words carry to us an appeal to offer ourselves in the same high spirit for the sake of others.

Theoretically, we are all convinced of social duty in some form or other. We realize how we are bound together in the same bundle of life, how we depend on each other, how we owe everything to others in the past and the present. Social indebtedness is, more than ever it has been, an accepted article of creed, but it is not such a power in life and conduct as we would expect from such universal acceptance. There will never be much practical result of the creed except through the power of a religious motive. A first principle of Christian ethics is the dedication of gifts in the service of others. There can be no real consecration which does not include consecration of gifts. Men possess varying endowments and different advantages. These may be in

many different forms, gifts of eye or hand or brain, special capacity in some particular line. To one manual skill, to another artistic feeling, or inventive brain, gifts of temperament and nature, and advantages of training and education.

All gifts have an inherent right to be developed and increased. It is a duty to exercise and train them by wise and constant use. But this duty is not exhausted by giving the special endowments as good opportunities of development as possible. Selfish employment will only minister to evil, and will bring loss to the gifts themselves. They must be exercised not for their own sake at all, but as our contribution to the world, to which we owe so much that we can never otherwise repay. Selfish use is a perversion of the gift. It is, after all, no credit to us that we possess any gift. If we have it, it is because we have received it. The only possible credit is that we have used it well, and that im-

plies employment on behalf of others. We are debtors to all, and if we make no attempt to pay our debt and even refuse to own our obligation, it is like receiving something under false pretences. Such gifts as leisure, position, wealth, acquirements of culture, are all as trusts on behalf of others. They must be accepted in the light of social stewardship, or we lose even the right to possess them. They are opportunities and capacities of influence.

It is not just that our gifts should be tithed, and a portion given over to higher and larger use. That in itself is a poor thing, appeasing conscience by a pittance that we may be allowed to squander the rest on self. The *gifts* themselves must be dedicated, used reverently and sacredly. Any true view of social stewardship demands the offering of personal service. All advantages must be accepted, not as occasions for selfish use or for personal vanity, but for better service, a means for

a wider ministry. This social office can only be truly fulfilled by individual consecration. The complete dedication of gifts will only be secured by first of all offering them to God. Anything else means misuse. No mere social fervor will last which is not rooted in a deep sense of responsibility to God the Giver. Such consecration ensures the large and generous dedication of all capacities. It alone will guard and hallow our work, and save it from selfishness and from failure.

This implies more than a high aim, more than an unselfish motive, more than the sincere desire to use our faculties to the best advantage even for others. To secure this infallibly and to make it a permanent purpose we need the element of consecration. That is a more interior thing than merely dedicating gifts. It means not only consecrating what we have, but consecrating *ourselves*. What we are is of more ultimate importance than what we do. The value of our

actions is conditioned by what we are in heart and spirit. It is little to offer a compartment of life, a portion of our capacities, if we keep back ourselves. Consecration is the one and only effective way of serving; for it uses the whole life. Most of our lives, for example, are taken up by routine, so that everything depends on the spirit that animates and inspires the routine. The common round makes up the staple of our lives for most of us, and if that be divorced from religion, it means that by far the major part is left outside. But when self is given up to God, the ordinary interests and occupations easily and naturally become methods of service. One final act of self-surrender quickens a sense of duty all round; for self-devotion manifests itself in active service; holiness finds its complete expression in love; the practical goal of consecration is its effect on conduct. When the heart is devoted to God, devotion is the natural attitude of the whole life.

THE CONSECRATION OF WORK

In common language, we limit devotion to what we call worship; but devotion is a larger thing than worship. Devotion is the end of which worship is the means. Worship is only designed to feed devotion; for devotion is the state of being devoted to God. And this is the beginning and the middle and the end of religion. Our Christian religion is not a matter of observances. It is the hallowing of all life, taking in its sweep all interests and all conduct and all thought and all intention. When a man can say with a sincere heart, "I consecrate myself," all the outgoings of self, all the activities of self, all the affairs of self become suffused by the same spirit. The consecration of gifts is involved in the consecration of self. It is the leaven that leavens the whole lump of life. The principle becomes comprehensive, from the centre to the circumference, filling the whole circle. "Whether ye eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

THE CONSECRATION OF WORK

The world to-day, as always, is face to face with social difficulties, with urgent problems, haunted by the evils and accumulated miseries of a dangerous social condition. What is our duty in the many difficult situations? Have we to offer whatever gifts we possess as our share of the common good? Surely. But the way to take part in the redemption of society is that a man should purify himself, should consecrate himself. The giving of anything he has apart from himself will not do much. At the best it could only be a palliative. There is no other secret of power and lasting influence. "The gift without the giver is bare"; for our social difficulties are more than economic difficulties. They have all moral roots, and what will bring no moral and spiritual help is healing the hurt slightly, saying Peace, when there is no peace.

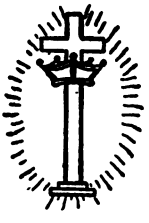
Consecration is the first secret of power. It gives influence a true direction and an unerring aim. We can see how it should

do so; for it purifies ambitions and motives, and strips the soul of all that hinders and retards. To give self up to God, that He may take us and make us and use us, to have done with self-interest and self-seeking, creates opportunities of influence. This consecration of character is much more far-reaching than any desultory consecration of gifts, even if that were possible by itself. It induces and implies self-scrutiny, the examination of motives. It destroys pride and sloth, and moves a man to bend to his share of the burden. Think what power would be unloosed if we each submitted to this process of consecration, this daily dedication, opening up heart and life to the guidance of God. Is there any problem too hard, any situation too difficult, any evil too deep-rooted for a consecrated Church to face and conquer? If in humility and sincerity we offered our service, what instruments of good would lie ready to the hand of God.

This is where we are weak. Self or pleasure or thoughtlessness has blunted the edge or misdirected the aim, so that the stroke makes no impression. Our Master is so badly served by us, so poorly represented, so languidly followed. His purposes are so feebly supported, His light so dimly shown, His mind so blunderingly understood. The Church makes so little impact on the world, just because it has so little consecration, so little submission to the complete will of God. Yet there is no power in all the world so potent as the power of personal holiness, the power of a consecrated life.

It is also the greatest missionary agent. A religion spreads not by intellectual conviction but by moral suasion, by the persistence of a type that impresses men in spite of themselves. It creates a type of character and life, and ultimate victory lies with the higher type. The Church must convince the world of God, not by Christian logic, but by Christian love, by

the fruits of faith in a winsome personality, by the persuasive power of a tender and true and honorable and faithful life. The Christian faith of the early centuries spread not by the force of its logic, but by the attraction of its piety, because men saw the beauty of holiness. The first apologists never missed the weight of this great argument. They pointed confidently to the Christian life as the overwhelming evidence of the Christian faith. They pointed to the probity and courage and faith and purity and devotion of Christ's people. A Christian made a better servant, a better master, a better workman, more faithful to duty, more reliable in all the relations of life. They were better husbands and wives and parents and children, better citizens also, as it came to be seen even against the mass of prejudice in the minds of rulers. We are missing a great opportunity if we do not follow out the practical implication of our faith. What do ye more

than others? is our Lord's demand. It is a call to consecration of our whole nature and life, to make life religious, and to make religion life.

"Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing."